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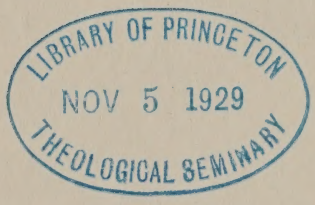

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GOD THE REDEEMER

THE REDEMPTION FROM SIN AS WROUGHT BY JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD

A TEXTBOOK FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

BY

CHARLES G. HERZOG, S.J.

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AT WOODSTOCK COLLEGE
WOODSTOCK, MARYLAND

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PREFACE

In presenting this, the third volume of THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY SERIES to the public and in particular to our Catholic Colleges and Universities, I feel that it is but just to express first of all my sense of gratitude to God and under Him to those who have so generously and laboriously brought to its present stage of realization a work which is filling such an essential need of Catholic life today, namely a clear and solid exposition of Catholic doctrine.

The present volume treats of that part of the deposit of Faith which contains the most consoling truths of Christian doctrine, the boundless love of God for fallen man and His infinite mercy towards us. That love and mercy we can never fathom, but a sincere study of the mystery of our Redemption by the Incarnate Word cannot fail to make the student more courageous in fighting every evil inclination of his lower nature and more steadfast in pursuing those noble ideals which the Catholic Church has received from her Founder and faithfully transmits to her children.

May He of Whom this volume treats add His grace to its author's labors in order that the clearer knowledge derived from its perusal may lead the student to a greater love and a truer service of God our Redeemer.

July 31, 1929.

EDWARD C. PHILLIPS, S.J.
Provincial of the Maryland-New York Province of the Society of Jesus

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The Truth of Christianity Series of college text books on the Catholic religion comprises four volumes and covers the entire field of Catholic teaching. This volume is the third of the series. Since it is a text book, it has been arranged for the use of both professors and students. At the same time every effort has been made to present the matter in such a way as to make it both profitable and palatable to the general reading public. The use of scientific, theological terms has been reduced to a minimum.

The subject matter of the present volume comprises the Incarnation, the perfection of the human nature of the Son of God, the Satisfaction for sin offered by Christ, the Merit obtained by Christ, the favors granted to the Mother of God, the veneration due to Mary and the Saints, the veneration due to relics and sacred images, and, last in order but not least in importance, the nature of divine grace and the divine laws of its distribution. All has been gathered under the general heading of *God the Redeemer.*

The method followed is the method of Catholic Theology. First of all, the teaching of the Catholic Church is given and explained. Then, from Holy Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, are drawn those statements from which the Church derives her teaching.

It would be neither necessary nor practicable to set down explicitly the full testimony of Scripture and Tradition bearing on the various truths. Of Scriptural testimony enough will be given to make it clear that the Church in her teaching follows Holy Scripture with infallible fidelity. From the writings of the Fathers will

be cited in each instance two or three statements, which will serve as typical examples of the manner in which the Fathers expressed the doctrines taught by the Catholic Church.

Woodstock College
Woodstock, Maryland
June 26, 1929

Charles G. Herzog, S.J.

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INTRODUCTION

This volume, the third of THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY SERIES, treats of the Redemption of the world by the Son of God. The doctrine of the Redemption is a truth revealed to us by God; it must, therefore, be learned from the infallible custodian of Divine Revelation, the Church of Christ. To that Church must we go for an understanding of the rôle of Christ the Redeemer.

According to the teaching of the Church, God became man to repair the damage wrought by sin. Man had sinned; God had decreed that sin and its eternal penalty would be taken away only on condition that man himself would offer to God by way of reparation as much honor as, by his sin, he had offered Him dishonor. But the dishonor to God arising from sin was so great that complete reparation for sin was beyond the power of a mere man. The dishonor done to God by sin is measured by the infinite dignity of the offended God; the honor which a mere man can give to God is measured by the worth of man himself. This is the law which measures the acts of man, whether those acts are referred to a fellow-man or to God.

But God's decree said that complete reparation had to be made, and, by God's mercy, would be made. It had to be made by man, and yet, at the same time, was to be of such supreme moral worth in God's sight that it would fully compensate for the insult offered to God by sin. It was clear, then, that man could be delivered from his sin only by a man whose worth was truly divine; in other words, by a man who was God.

Since man could not become God, God became man. "And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us"

(John I, 14). Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, stood before God as the Divine Substitute for all men, and by His Passion and Death gave to God that homage of infinite worth which righted the wrong done by sin. Christ delivered man from the bondage of sin, and the price paid was the passion and death suffered in His human nature. This work of repairing the insult done to God, and of winning back man's freedom from sin, was the work of the Divine Redemption.

The doctrine of the Redemption begins with the sin of Adam, that sin which lost for Adam and all his descendants the grace of God and the right to the supernatural destiny of the Beatific Vision. The doctrine reaches its high point in the Person of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, true God, equal to the Father, true Man, born of the Virgin Mary. Infinite Divinity and created humanity meet in one Divine Person. That Person stands between God and man, He breaks down the barrier erected by sin. He re-unites in friendship the creature and the Creator.

That Adam sinned, and by his sin brought estrangement between God and the whole human race, was shown in the second volume of this series, *God and Creation.*

That Jesus Christ is true God, equal in all things to the Father, was shown in the first volume, *The Defense of the Catholic Church.*

With these two presuppositions, then, we begin the Catholic explanation of the Redemption by showing that Christ was possessed of that second necessary requisite for the work of Redemption—He, the Infinite God, was truly man.

CHAPTER I

CHRIST WAS TRUE MAN

Was Jesus Christ truly man? No one can deny that He appeared to be a man and acted like a man. But was He, the Infinite God, really man?

To some persons it might seem to be of no practical importance to determine whether that external form, which the Son of God took to Himself, was the form of complete human nature. These persons might say: "We know that Christ is God; why should we be further interested in determining whether the visible appearance, which He had, was real human nature. Once we discover that a bit of metal is pure gold, it becomes of very little interest to us to examine the external form which that lump of gold possesses."

To such persons we answer that every act of God should be interesting to us; we human beings should be intensely interested in what God is and what God does. How can it fail to interest us to find out whether our God really became man? Let us once suspect that God so loved us and our human nature that He Himself became a man, at once the question becomes of intense personal interest to us—we burn with desire to find out whether it is really true that our God became man like unto us. If we are further led to suspect that God wanted to teach us a multitude of truths about Himself and about His love for us, and that He wished to become man so that He might tell us those truths as man to man, then the question becomes decidedly more vital to us. Suppose, however, that we are told this startling bit of heavenly news: "Sin, started by Adam, and continued by and in his descend-

ants, can be blotted out. But a man must do it. A man must give so much honor to God that complete reparation will be given the injury done to God by sin. No mere man can do this, only a God can do it, but it must be a God who is at the same time a man." What effect would this news have on us? We should see at once that the most tremendously important question for all of us is, "Did God become a real man and take our sin away?"

To Catholic Theology the question of Christ's being really man is of highest interest because Catholic Theology does not merely suspect, or suppose; it knows that God did love us so much that He became man like unto us, He really did speak to us about God as man to man, He actually became that One and Only Man who could take away sin, and did actually set man once more on his way to his eternal happiness in heaven. Catholics, then, are naturally interested in the fact that God became man to show Himself our Friend, our Teacher, our Savior.

First denial of Christ's humanity

Those who deny that Christ is God make no difficulty at all in admitting that the central figure of the Gospel story, Jesus Christ, was a real man, just as much a man as any of us. But in the early days of Christianity there were some who believed that Christ was God, yet fancied that it was either unbecoming, or even impossible, that God should become man.

These deniers of the real humanity of Christ were commonly called "Docetae" (the word was derived from the Greek word *δοκεῖν*, meaning "to seem"). They were given this name because they held that Christ was not really man, he merely "seemed" to be a man. God, they said, did not really take to Himself a human nature, body and soul; by a continual miracle, God made men think that in looking at Christ and hearing Him talk they were looking at a real man and listening to him.

Our question then is, "Was Christ, the Son of God, at the same time a real man?"

Catholic answer to the question

The answer of our Catholic faith is, "Yes, Christ was not only true God; He was also true man."

What is man? Man is a being, made up of a body and a spiritual, immortal soul. The body alone is not man, the soul alone is not man. If God took merely a body to Himself, He would not be man, even though that body were in every respect like our bodies. If God took to Himself merely a soul, He would not be man, even though that soul were in its make-up just like the soul which each of us possesses. When we say that Christ was truly man, then, we mean that He had a body like ours and that He had a soul like ours and that the two, the body and soul, were joined together just as ours are and worked together just as ours do. His body and His soul were united to form a complete human nature, a complete man.

Most of our knowledge consists in classifying—putting into classes—the various things we meet in life. We study the thing until we know what it really is. This knowing what a thing really is amounts to nothing more or less than classifying it.

I walk along a city street, my senses are alert, my eyes are open to see things, my ears to hear things. All of my senses are ready to receive impressions from outside. And as I walk I continually classify things around me. "Those things are houses; that is a trolley car; that little thing is a baby; that invisible, but not unfelt, thing that blew off my hat, and sent it rolling down the street, was a gust of wind." We do not always announce our classification verbally, but mentally the classification goes on without ceasing.

Now, how do we learn to distinguish in this way one thing from another, so as to say without erring, "That is a stone; that is a man; that is a dog"? The simple answer is that we see how a thing affects our senses, eyes,

ears, taste, touch, smell; we examine its actions—we then know enough to say definitely what the thing is. We know its nature.

But why all this discussion of the method by which our mind comes to know what a thing really is? What has it to do with the question as to whether Christ was really man? It has a great deal to do with it. The reason why the Docetae denied that Christ had a real human nature was precisely this, that they forgot that when we see that a thing looks like a man, acts like a man, then are we sure that a real man is before us. We can be as sure that Christ was a real man as we are that a tree is a tree. I am sure that the tree is a real tree because, as I look at it, I see that it has all the qualities of a tree and all the activities of a tree. I see a multitude of green leaves clinging to wooden branches, all the branches are united into one system by virtue of their being rooted in one huge trunk. I see the leaves blossom green in the spring time, and in the fall change the green for red, then the red for brown, till before the first cold of winter they drop to the ground. "It is a tree," we say. Our mind puts it into the class of trees because it has all the qualities and activities of a tree. In the same way we gaze out upon the whole world of creatures lying round about us; we put each one in its class according to the qualities and activities which it manifests. Even our knowledge of God Himself has to accommodate itself to this law, that the natural, human way of knowing what anything is, is to study the qualities and activities of the thing and, from these, come to a perception of the thing itself.

How we know that Christ was man

Remembering, then, this law of human knowledge, and applying it to the figure of Christ as presented by the Gospel, we have to admit that Christ was really man. He has a human nature in all its completeness, body and soul. He has a body which is a real body, not a ghostlike

imitation of a body; with it He sees, and hears, and eats, and feels. He has a soul which is spiritual, though created. It possesses an intellect which works just as ours does; it has a human will which makes human decisions and has human emotions of like and dislike, attraction and repulsion just as ours has. But, as we shall see later on, our bodies and souls bear the result of original sin to such an extent, that there is in us an attraction to sin, a pull towards sin; but the human nature of Christ was completely free from this pull towards sin, which is called concupiscence. His freedom from concupiscence does not make Him less a man; Adam before the fall was surely a complete man; but he was just as surely free from all concupiscence.

Article of Faith

It is of faith that Christ was truly man. If Christ was not man, then the Incarnation never took place. If He was not man, the Redemption did not take place. For Redemption was either brought about by a God-Man or not at all. So, in teaching the Incarnation and the Redemption as Articles of Faith, the Church is, at the same time, declaring that Christ had real humanity.

However, in order to have an explicit statement of the Church on the matter, we select the solemn definition of the Council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451 A.D. In the first canon of this Council Christ is declared to be "perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity," "of the same substance as the Father because of His divinity, of the same substance as we are because of His humanity."

Proved from Scripture

If anything is evident in the Gospels, it is that Christ was man. He had a real, human body and a real, human soul, endowed with a human mind and will.

1. *He had a human body.*

Let the following statements certify to that fact:

"And the word was made flesh" (John I, 14).

"Yet now he hath reconciled (you) in the body of his flesh through death. . . ." (Col. I, 22).

He was circumcised (Luke II, 21).

He ate and drank (Matt. XI, 19).

He slept (Mark IV, 38).

He suffered, He was crucified and He died.

2. *He had a human soul.*

Scripture assures us that in Christ there was a human soul. In the same way in which I am sure that a friend of mine has a human soul, so can I be sure from Holy Scripture that Christ had a human soul. I know that my friend has a human soul because he manifests a human intellect and a human will; wherever there is a human intellect and a human will there also is a human soul to which the intellect and the will belong. I am sure, then, that Christ had a human soul because it is evident from the Scripture portrayal of Him that He had human thoughts, and human decisions and emotions.

It is not enough, of course, to say, "It is evident that Christ had a human intellect and a human will, because Scripture presents Him as one who thinks and wills." It must be shown that there were in Him thoughts and will-actions which were merely human, which could not have been the thoughts and will-actions of the divine intellect and will which Christ possessed.

3. *He had a human mind.*

We know from Scripture that Christ prayed to God and gave thanks to Him. Now Christ, as God, did not pray to God and give thanks to him. God does not pray to Himself, nor give thanks to Himself, nor does one Divine Person pray to another, or give thanks to Him. Prayer and thanksgiving are always to another, and always to another who is in some way superior to the one praying. If, then, Christ prayed and gave thanks, as

He really did, it was as man that He did so. If Christ prayed as man, then He had a human mind with which he understood the reason of His prayer. If Christ, as man, gave thanks, then He must have had a human mind with which He knew what were the favors for which He was thankful.

4. *He had a human will.*

Let us select several instances of the manifestation of a human will in Christ:

(*a*) Christ exercised acts of obedience to God.

In the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians we read, "He humbled himself becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross" (II, 8).

There can be no question of Christ being obedient with His divine will; the divine will is infinitely supreme and can be obedient to no one. However, since Christ was obedient, He must have had a will, not divine, but human, with which He obeyed.

(*b*) Christ paid adoration to God.

When speaking to the Samaritan woman Our Lord said, "We adore that which we know" (John IV, 22). Here Our Lord asserts that He adores God. Now, the act of adoration cannot be had without a will which does the adoration. It certainly was not with the divine will that Christ paid the adoration to God, because the divine will can pay adoration to no one. There must have been, then, in Christ another will with which He performed this act of adoring—a human will.

(*c*) That Christ had a human will is also made clear from the sadness which overwhelmed Him at the foreseeing of His passion.

"My soul is sorrowful unto death" (Matt. XXVI, 38). Sorrow is in the will of the one who is sorrowing. Christ,

then, had a will which felt sad. Since sorrow is impossible in the divine will, there must have been in Christ a created, human will in which that sorrow resided.

Shown from tradition

In the writings of the Fathers, Christ is portrayed not only as true God, but also as true man. He has real humanity, not a mere illusory form which appears human; His body is a real body; He has a human, created soul, endowed with intellect and will.

A few citations from the writings of the Fathers will serve as examples of the clear statement of the doctrine in the tradition of the Church:

St. Irenaeus asserts the reality of the humanity of Christ: "Thus, they are vain who say that He appeared but in fancy: for these things took place, not in fancy, but in substance of truth. But if, not being Man, He appeared Man, neither did He continue that which He was in reality, a Divine Spirit (because the Spirit is invisible); nor was there any truth in Him, for He was not those things which He appeared to be" (Adv. Haer., l. 5, c. 1, n. 2).

St. Augustine thus states the reality of the human body of Christ: "If the Body of Christ was a mere appearance, Christ was a deceiver, and if Christ was a deceiver, then there is no such thing as truth. But Christ is truth. Therefore, the body of Christ was not a mere appearance" (83 QQ. q. 14).

The same St. Augustine teaches the existence of a human soul in Christ: "Let them confess that Christ united to the only-begotten Word, not body alone, but a human soul as well, so as to be that one Person who is Christ, the Word and Man. But Man is Soul and Body" (Contra Serm. Arian. c. 9, n. 7).

Two natures in Christ

Did Christ, then, have two natures? You answer, "Of course He did. He was God, therefore He had the divine nature. He was man, therefore He had also the human nature." Your answer is correct. And, as a

matter of fact, it might seem useless to propose the question, "Did Christ have two natures," were it not that a heresy, the heresy of the Monophysites, a heresy very important in the history of the Church, arose from a wrong answer to this question.

Monophysite heresy; Eutyches

Eutyches, Abbot of Constantinople, who lived in the fifth century, put into motion the Monophysite heresy, which even to this day has adherents in Syria and Egypt and Mesopotamia. He took the question, "Did Christ have two natures" and gave it the answer, "No, He had only one nature." And the strange part of his denial was that he held that Christ was God, and that Christ had assumed human nature.

The bishops, assembled at the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.), took up the same question and put their answer in the form of a solemn definition of faith. Their answer equivalently was, "Yes, Christ has two distinct and complete natures, divine and human nature."

Meaning of "nature"

How did it happen that Eutyches, who held strenuously that Christ was really God, and had really taken on human nature, answered the question by saying that Christ had but one nature?

A word or two first to make clear what is meant by a "nature." A nature is a complete substance. It is a substance, not an accident. If we examine created things in the world, we see that they are made up of two elements—a collection of qualities which are attached to the substance, and then the substance itself. The qualities are called accidents—they cling to the substance. The substance is called substance because it underlies the qualities, it does not cling to anything; it stands by itself. Of course, since we know a thing only through our senses, eyes, ears, etc., and since only the accidents can strike our senses, we do not see the thing itself, the substance, with our eyes, or hear it with our ears, or feel it with our touch. Our eyes see only the color and shape, our ears hear only

the sound, our touch reaches only the resisting quality of the thing. But we know that behind all these accidents there is the underlying thing itself, the substance. Take a bit of gold, for instance. The gold is not the glistening yellow which my eyes see, nor the nugget shape which it has, nor the hardness, nor the weight; the gold itself is the thing which is yellow, and nugget-shaped, and hard and heavy. In the same way, a man is not the man's color, or his shape, or his weight; a man's actions, his running, his walking, his talking, are not the man. The man is the underlying substance which has the color and weight and shape, and does the running and walking and talking.

We now understand the first part of our definition of what a "nature" is—that it is a *substance*. We said, however, that a nature was a *complete* substance. A thing is complete when it is not a part of something. A man's substance, for instance, has two parts, a body and a soul. The body is not an accident, the soul is not an accident; both are substances, but both are incomplete substances because they are only parts of the entire man. The *complete* substance is the entire man.

Eutyches then said that after Christ became man there were not two natures in Him; there was only one. Now, what led him to make that false statement? He thought that it would be impossible to say that Christ was one Person, and yet, at the same time, had two natures in Him. In asserting so vigorously that Christ was only one Person, not two Persons, Eutyches was correct, of course; but in saying that the one Person, Christ, could not have two natures, he was wrong. No one is so presumptuous as to say that he can clearly understand how one person can have two natures; yet God, through His Revealed Word, states that fact about the Person of His Son, and God's statement as to the truth of anything clinches that truth eternally. No one understands how

the three Divine Persons can have one and the same nature; but God has told us that it is so, and that certifies for us the truth of the doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity.

What kind of nature was that one nature, which, according to Eutyches, Christ possessed? It is not clear what he himself taught. His followers were divided in their explanation; some said the human nature simply disappeared by being absorbed in the divine nature, just as a drop of honey is absorbed in the ocean; others said that the divine and the human nature simply merged to form a new kind of nature.

But these explanations are of no importance to us. Their fundamental assertion, that Christ did not have two natures, human and divine, is false.

Nor is there need to advance any special argument against this false doctrine. We have shown that Christ is really God and has divine nature; He is also True Man, and has human nature. He is in truth God and Man; He has two complete natures.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Why is the question of Christ's human nature important to a Catholic?
2. What did the Docetae teach concerning the human nature of Christ?
3. What is the Catholic teaching concerning the human nature of Christ?
4. How does the human mind determine that a thing is a man? A tree?
5. Show from Holy Scripture that Christ had a real, human body.
6. Show from Holy Scripture that Christ had a human intellect.
7. Show from Holy Scripture that Christ had a human will.
8. Would it be possible to have a human intellect and a human will without a human soul?
9. What did the Monophysites teach concerning the human nature of Christ?
10. Prove that the Monophysite teaching is wrong.

CHAPTER II

ONE PERSON IN CHRIST

Introduction

Was Christ one person, or was He two persons? This question may sound odd; perhaps senseless. Our natural impulse on hearing the question is to say, "Of course Christ was one person; how could He be two persons?"

And yet, odd though the question may sound, it is of as much importance as that other question, "Is Christ truly God?"

If He is only one person, then He is a divine person and only that, because, from what we have seen so far, it was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity who took human nature to Himself. And if Christ is only one person, and that divine, then every action of Christ was an act of a Divine Person, an act of God. If Christ is only one person and that divine, then it is true that every action which came from His human nature, all His bodily actions, walking, eating, suffering, all the thoughts in His human intellect, all the actions of His human will—all these were the actions of God. It would be true to say, "God walked, God ate, God suffered, God grieved, God died."

But if Christ is two persons; if the name "Christ" is not the name of one person, but a name given to two persons, one a Divine Person, the other a human person, the two working together in such complete harmony that the human person always acts in thought, word and action as the Divine Person wishes and directs, then we could not say, "God was born of the Virgin Mary; God lived as a boy at Nazareth; God's lips told the Apostles what things men were to believe; God was scourged, was cruci-

fied, and died." We should have to say, "A mere human person did all these things."

We shall see later on that we are not only redeemed from sin through the human sufferings and death of Christ, but that those human sufferings and death redeemed us only because a Divine Person, God, suffered and died. But if there are two persons in Christ, then the sufferings and death were those of a mere human person —and that would mean that we were not redeemed at all.

One Person in Christ: divine

There is no doubt that in Christ there was but one person and that Person was divine. Holy Scripture teaches it, tradition teaches it, and the Church has solemnly defined it. The fact, then, is certain, since it is affirmed as true by God.

A mystery

But when we try to understand how it can be so, we find ourselves face to face with a mystery. This does not mean that we cannot reach some understanding of how Christ can be but one person, and yet have two complete natures;—as a matter of fact we do understand it partially. It is a clear and perfect knowledge of this mystery of the Incarnation which is denied to us. The two difficulties which stand in the way of our seeing it clearly are:

1. How can the complete human nature of Christ exist without being a human person? Anybody would feel justified in saying, "Join together a human body and a human soul, and you have not merely complete human nature, but also a human person. Why is it, then, that the human nature of Christ is not a human person?"

2. How can Christ, if He is only one person, have two natures? Should it not be true that everything that exists can have but one nature?

It cannot be denied that, if God had not told us that there could be a human nature which was not a human

person, our minds might never have suspected the possibility of such a thing.

We shall now endeavor to gain some insight into the mystery. Some of our knowledge will come from our own natural reason, the rest, and by far the greater portion, will come from what God has revealed to us.

What is a person?

What is a person? Let us suppose that we are living at the time when Christ was on earth. We put the question, "What is a human person?" to one of the Jews of Judaea. Most likely he would answer the question by pointing to several human beings, one after the other, and saying of each one, "This is a human person." If we then said to him, "So, everyone with a human body and a soul, is a human person?" his answer would be, "Yes, that is correct."

But suppose that at this point Jesus of Nazareth passed by, and the Jew sees Him and points to Him saying, "There is another human person"; would that statement be correct? It would not. My natural reason would not tell me that the statement was false, but if I asked Christ Himself, He would tell me that it was false. He would tell me that He was not a human person, although He had a body and a soul. He would assure me that in His case God had put on this earth a human nature which was not a human person.

This answer of Christ would set us thinking. And the result of our thoughts would be this: we should know that by the natural order of things every human nature was a human person, but that God could in His omnipotent power cause to exist a human nature which was not a human person.

Does that mean that God could put into this world a being which was merely a human nature; a being which existed as an independent being, acting on its own, as you or I do, and yet not a human person? It does not mean that. "But," you say, "did not Christ tell us that

His human nature was not a human person, though it was a complete human nature, and that it was an independent being acting on its own as you or I do?" Christ did not tell us all that. True, He did say that He has a complete human nature which was not a human person; but He did not say that His human nature was an independent being, acting on its own.

His human nature was not independent, although it had a free will; it did not act on its own, so that all its actions were ultimately to be attributed to it as to the last responsible agent. It was given to His Divine Person in such a way that it became "the human nature of a Divine Person." It did not act on its own. Every act of that human nature was the act of the Divine Person. This giving over of the human nature to the Divine Person is the reason why that human nature is not a human person.

And now, in a rather unphilosophical way, we have hit upon the philosophical meaning of a "person." If we ask the philosophers and the theologians, who have for centuries pondered over the matter, to tell us what their definition of a person is, they would say: "A person is a complete, rational nature, which is the last responsible agent of all its actions. It acts in its own right, and is not given over to another person to be the nature of that person."

Applying this definition to the human nature of Christ, we say—His human nature was not a human person, because that human nature was given over to a Divine Person to be the human nature of that Divine Person. Thereafter, all the actions of that human nature were the actions of God. Even when the free will of that human nature acted, that free act was an act for which God was ultimately responsible, it was God's act.

If we apply this definition to ourselves, we see why we are human persons. We have complete rational human nature; my human nature is the responsible agent of my

actions; it acts in its own right, and is not given over to any other person to be the nature of that other person. Each of us can say, "I am a person; my actions are mine and mine alone. When I act, the act is mine; it is not the act of God, nor the act of anyone else but myself."

What is it, then, that makes us persons? What is it in our human nature which makes those human natures persons? It is our "not being given over to another person," our "standing alone-ness," our standing as the last responsible agent of our actions. That is our personality. By it we are made persons. Because the human nature of Christ was given over to the Divine Person, because it did not "stand alone" as the last responsible agent of its actions, it did not have human personality, it was not a human person.

Of course, there never was a moment when Christ's human nature existed separate from the Divine Person, but to endeavor to illustrate what we have said about the notion of "person," let us make the following supposition. Suppose, when the time came for the Son of God to become man, He had done so by taking as His own the human nature of an already existing man of thirty years of age. In that case, before the time of taking over, that man would have been a human person; after the taking over, there would not have been a human person at all.

Further analysis of personality

Theologians ask the question, "To have a human person is there something added to the human nature, which gives it that finishing touch to make it a human person, or does human personality come merely from a denial of union of the human nature with another person?" In answering the question there is no unanimity of opinion. We will not enter into the discussion. We shall be content with saying that all Catholic theologians agree that human personality, whatever it is in itself, gives to a complete rational nature its unique independence, by reason of which it is the ultimate agent of its actions. A man's

personality is that which makes his human nature his nature, and makes his actions his actions.

Equivalent of personality in other created substances

No one calls a stone a person, or a cow a person. The word "person" is reserved for a being which has reason and will. But every created, complete substance naturally has that independence, that "standing alone-ness," by reason of which it is the ultimate agent of its own actions. The actions of a cow are the actions only of that cow; those actions can be predicated of the cow alone. Complete created substances which have not reason and will are not persons; they are called merely *supposita,* which means that they too have their unique independence, they are the ultimate agents of their actions.

One person in Christ: an article of faith

It is an article of Catholic faith that in Christ there is but one personality, and that that personality is divine. The Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) defined the doctrine in the second of its canons:

"If anyone do not confess that the Word of God the Father is hypostatically united to the flesh, and that Christ is one with His own flesh, alike God and Man, let him be anathema."

The phrase "hypostatically united" means united in personality. What the Council says is that the Divine Person, the Word of God, is one with His humanity; Christ is one Person, God and Man.

Heresy of Nestorius

It is not surprising that in the first days of Christianity, the human mind, face to face for the first time with the mystery of the Incarnation, was at times so confused in its understanding of this "Christ Mystery"—one Divine Person with two complete natures—that it often reached conclusions which were false. Nor is it surprising that there were from the very beginning some who preferred to deny the revealed fact of "One Divine Person in two natures," rather than admit a doctrine which their limited minds could not fathom.

In other words, it is not surprising that there were

those whose faith was not strong enough to accept this doctrine on the mere word of God. Man is always tempted to be a Rationalist; to refuse to accept any truth which he cannot thoroughly understand. As though an Infinite God could not have some truth to reveal to us which our minds could not fathom. Faith tells us to accept as true whatever is told to us by God; Rationalism tells us to accept only what our mind finds out for itself.

In the fifth century there was a rather widespread denial of the oneness of Person in Christ. The leader of the movement was Nestorius. He was a Syrian by birth and became Patriarch of Constantinople in 428 A.D. In this position he at once began to spread the errors of his master, Theodore of Mopsuestia, concerning the personality of Christ. These errors may be summarized as follows:

1. In Christ there are two natures, human and divine; and two persons, human and divine.

2. The human person is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary; the Divine Person is the Word, the Son of God.

3. The two persons are intimately united; the Divine Person dwelling in the man Jesus as in a temple. By this indwelling the man Jesus became "God-bearer" (*Deifer, Theophoros*), God in a figurative sense, but not really God.

4. This intimate union between the Divine Person and the man Jesus is merely moral, such as exists between two friends; a union which produces merely a harmony and co-ordination between the will of the human person and the will of the Divine Person.

5. Mary was not the Mother of God, but merely the mother of the man, Jesus. She can be called the Mother of God only in a figurative sense, inasmuch as she gave birth to the man, who had God dwelling in Him.

St. Cyril of Alexandria

Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria at the time, was commissioned by Pope Celestine I to preside over the Council of Ephesus in 431. In twelve propositions he condemned the doctrines of Nestorius. The Council approved of his condemnations, and Nestorius was deposed and excommunicated.

Proof from Scripture

Holy Scripture clearly teaches that in Christ there is only one Person, the Divine Person. It teaches this just as clearly as it teaches that in Christ there is the divine nature and a complete human nature. And just as we know that Christ had the divine nature because Scripture says of Christ what can be said of God alone, just as we know that Christ had a complete human nature because Scripture says of Him what can be said only of a man, so we know that Christ was one Divine Person because of the way in which Scripture speaks of Him—it always speaks of Christ as of one Person, and that Divine.

After we have made a complete survey of all that Scripture says of Christ we must come to this conclusion:

1. Christ had real and complete human nature, because there is said of Him what can truly be said only of a man—Christ was born in time of Mary, He was circumcised, He had human thoughts and human will-actions, He suffered and died.

2. Christ had the divine nature, because there is said of Him what can truly be said only of God—He is the Word of God, and the Word was God, He is the only-begotten Son of God, He is eternal. He has one and the same substance or nature as the Father.

3. The Person who is God is identical with the Person who is man. Scripture does not say, as Nestorius asserted, that the Person who is God was merely united closely by a harmony of will and mind with the Person who is man. It simply says, and it

always says, that the Person who is God is the same as the Person who is man. It says that the Person who is the only-begotten Son of the Father is the same Person who was born of Mary; the Person who had the same divine nature which the Father had is the same Person who had a human nature which underwent suffering and death.

From all this it follows that there is in Christ one Person, a Divine Person. If in Him there were two persons, one human and the other divine, it would have been absolutely false for Scripture to assert constantly, and without any indication of mere figurative language, that the Person who was God was the same Person who was man. If in Christ there were two persons, then the Person who was God was a different person from the person who was man; a different person from the person who suffered and died. No law of human language will allow us to say of two friends, who are one in heart and mind, that they are really one person, that one of them really is the other. But Scripture does say that the Person who is God is the same as the Person who is man.

The Fathers

The Council of Ephesus, as we have seen, declared the oneness of Person in Christ. The Fathers, who came after this Council, merely repeated the doctrine. The Fathers who lived before the Council, though they were not called upon to defend explicitly against heretics the oneness of Christ's Person, nevertheless advanced the doctrine in simple and clear terms. We select the statements of several of the Fathers:

St. Gregory Nazianzen (Epist. ad Cled.) says, "If anyone introduces two sons, the one of God the Father, and the other of the Mother, but does not acknowledge them to be one and the same, he shall forfeit the adoptive sonship which has been promised to those who have the true

faith. For though there are two natures . . . there are not two sons."

St. Ambrose (Epist. 137, 3, 9) says, "For it was not one from the Father, another from the Virgin, but one and the same, though in a different way, from the Father and the Virgin."

The term "hypostatic union"

The technical term commonly given to this mysterious union between human nature and the Second Divine Person is "hypostatic union." It is taken to mean "personal union," "union of two complete natures under one personality." (The word "hypostatic" is from the Greek word *ὑπόστασις*). Though this word originally had a great variety of meanings, it was finally selected by theological writers in the first days of the Church to be the proper word to denote "person."

Hypostatic union, supernatural

In the hypostatic union a human body and soul, united to form one complete human nature, was assumed or taken over by the Second Divine Person to be His personal possession, His own nature, so that the actions of that human nature became the actions of God. The giving of a divine personality to a human nature was something which was in no way due to it, not in any way natural to it. What was natural to a human nature was to have a human personality. Not only did human nature have no natural demand for divine personality, but no creature which God ever created or could ever create has such a right. By right, divine personality belongs only to the divine nature; it is above the nature of any created thing to have the divine personality. That is to say, the union of the human nature with the Divine Person is from every point of view thoroughly supernatural.

Hypostatic union, perpetual

When Revelation tells us that God became man, we, who also are men, are filled with a just pride in our human nature; when it tells us that "God will be man for all eternity," we begin to see how much God loves us, since He has willed to be like us forever. And Revelation does

really tell us that: "The Son of God will be man forever." When time will be over, and all the friends of God will be enjoying the unspeakable joys of eternal happiness, one of the chief delights of heaven for us men will be the realization that one of the Persons of the Most Holy Trinity will forever be like unto us, a man.

"God is man forever"—an article of faith

The Church teaches as an article of faith, that, once the Divine Person had taken a human nature to be His own, that union was never to be broken, it was to last forever. We find in the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) a definition of the doctrine: "One and the same Christ, the only-begotten Son and Lord, in two natures inconfusedly, immutably, undividedly, inseparably. . . ." In these words the two natures are said to be the natures of the Son of God inseparably—that surely means that, not only will the divine nature forever be His divine nature, but also that the human nature of Christ will always be His, united to His Divine Person.

Holy Scripture

Of course, Holy Scripture does not say in the strict language of science, "The hypostatic union is perpetual." But the language which it does use states the truth with great clearness.

The Angel Gabriel, when announcing the Incarnation to Mary, foretells that Jesus, her Son to be, will be King forever: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke I, 31-34).

St. Paul, writing on the Priesthood of Christ, says that Christ will forever be our High Priest: "And the others indeed were made many priests, because by reason of death they were not suffered to continue; but this, for

that he continueth forever, hath an everlasting priesthood" (Heb. VII, 23-24).

Now, it is not the Word, but the Word made flesh, Jesus the God-Man, who is our King and our High Priest; and, if He is to be forever King and High Priest, then it is equally true that He will forever be the God-Man.

In the same letter to the Hebrews, St. Paul proclaims the eternity of the hypostatic union: "Jesus Christ, yesterday, and today, and the same forever" (13,8).

Were the Son of God ever to cast aside His human nature, He, it is true, would continue on in His existence as the Word, the Son of God, but He would not be Jesus Christ. Without the humanity, the Son of God is not Jesus Christ. When, then, St. Paul proclaims the uninterrupted and eternal existence of Jesus Christ, he is but proclaiming the perpetuity of the hypostatic union.

The triduum of Christ's death

But when Christ died, when His soul and body were separated, and the body was placed in the grave, was not the hypostatic union broken and interrupted, until at the Resurrection soul and body came together again and Christ rose from the dead?

As we have just now seen, the teaching of the Church, confirmed by the language of Holy Scripture, is that, when the Divine Person once took on human nature, He took it on forever, never to be cast aside even for a moment. There is really no need of proving in a special way that even during the three days of Christ's death, the body and soul of Christ still were united to the Divine Person, were still His body and soul.

But because the question offers a special difficulty to the mind, it will be helpful to give it special treatment.

We say, then, that during the three days of Christ's death, the body in the grave was still God's body; the soul was still God's soul.

If God had so wanted, He could have so arranged

things that when Christ died on Calvary, the Divine Person would have withdrawn all connection with the human soul and body. Had He done that, then during those days that soul and that body would not have been the body and the soul of the Son of God, and it would have been untrue to say that the Son of God was buried, that the Son of God with His human soul descended into hell. Now the Apostles' Creed, which embodies some of the fundamentals of our faith, says that the Son of God, the same who was born of Mary, and suffered under Pontius Pilate, was actually buried.—"And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord . . . born of the Virgin Mary, . . . died, . . . and was buried." These words mean that the body, during the time of its burial, was still united to the Divine Person. If it were not, then it had no connection at all with that Divine Person, the Son of God, and it would have been false to say that the Son of God was buried. When the body of a mere man is in the grave, we say that that man is buried, but we can say that truly, because that body naturally belongs to the person whose body is in the grave. But the body of Christ did not naturally belong to His Person. In case, then, He withdrew the hypostatic union from it, that body would lose all connection with Christ, and it would be false to say that the Son of God was buried.

This may be made clearer by making the following supposition. Suppose that when Christ was twenty years old, God decreed that for two years the human nature of Christ should be broken off from all union with the Divine Person. That human nature for two years would live and act alone; in fact, it would then have its own human personality, it would be a human person. During that time it would be false to say that the life and actions of that human person were the life and actions of the Son of God.

So, the Son of God can be said to have been buried only

if the body, which was buried, remained His body, and it remained His body only by reason of His personal union with it.

That the soul of Christ was also united to the Divine Person during the time of the burial follows from the mere fact that the body was so united; it would have been purposeless to continue the union with the body and not continue the union with the soul. Moreover, the soul of Christ, the Son of God, descended into Limbo. This is another statement of the Creed. If that soul was not still united to the Divine Person, it could not truthfully be said that the Son of God descended into hell.

Fathers on the triduum of death

The Fathers explicitly teach that, at the death of Christ, the Son of God did not break off the personal connection with the human body and the human soul. For example, St. Gregory of Nyssa says: "God . . . at the time of death, did not withdraw from either part of that which He had assumed. . . . The Divinity by an act of will caused soul and body to be separated, but made it clear that it always remained with both" (In Christ. Resurr. or. 1).

St. John Damascene says, "Though Christ as man underwent death, and His sacred soul was separated from His immaculate body, His divinity was in no way separated from soul or body" (De Fide Orthod. 3, c. 27).

When did hypostatic union take place?

It was possible for God to have become man by uniting to Himself a human nature which was already in independent existence. He could have taken the human nature of a child ten years old, or that of an adult man, and made it His own. Prior to that taking over, the human nature would have had a human personality, it would have been a human person. It was equally possible for God to have become man in such wise that from the first instant that the human nature existed, it was taken over by the Divine Person as His own personal possession. In this case the human nature would never, even for one

instant, have had human personality. Which manner of becoming man did God choose? Since many ways were possible in themselves, we can know with certainty which way God actually chose only from His own declaration, that is to say, from Revelation.

Hypostatic union took place at time of conception: article of faith

Though the Church has not explicitly defined that the humanity of Christ, from the first moment of its conception, was united to the Divine Person, still, in her constant and universal teaching, she proposes the doctrine as a revealed doctrine, and hence as an article of faith.

Proof from Scripture

According to Scripture, Mary is the Mother of God in the sense that she not only gave birth to the Divine Person, but also in the sense that she conceived Him. In the first chapter of St. Luke (v. 35), we read, "And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." She will give birth, therefore, to the Son of God. In verses 31-34 of the same chapter: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Vv. 31-34).

From these two statements we see that the child whom Mary conceived and to whom she gave birth, was the Divine Person, the Son of God. The hypostatic union, therefore, took place at the moment of conception.

Fathers

The teaching of the Fathers on this point is unmistakable. They declare that Mary not only gave birth to, but also conceived the Son of God.

St. Ignatius, Martyr: "Our God, Jesus Christ, was carried in the womb of Mary" (Epist. ad Ephes. n. 18).

St. Cyril of Alexandria: "The Blessed Virgin did not conceive a mere man, upon whom the Logos subsequently

descended; but He subjected Himself to a carnal birth by a union which had its inception in the maternal womb'' (Epist. ad Nestor. 1).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What is a person?
2. Explain what is meant by saying that Christ was one Person.
3. Why is the doctrine of the oneness of person in Christ of such importance?
4. What did Nestorius teach concerning the Person of Christ?
5. Show from Scripture that there was one Person in Christ.
6. Why is the hypostatic union called supernatural?
7. Show from Scripture that the hypostatic union is perpetual.
8. Was the hypostatic union interrupted while Christ was dead?
9. Explain what is meant by saying that the hypostatic union took place at the time of the conception of Christ.
10. Prove from Scripture that this is true.

CHAPTER III

THE HUMAN INTELLECT OF CHRIST

Introduction

Our human nature was singularly honored when God stepped down from heaven and became Man like unto us. Though it was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity who became Man, it was the Holy Trinity which was moved by infinite love of us men to place in this world the One Man who could bring peace between men and God, the One Man who could offer to God such satisfaction for the sins of the world that God would once more be able to embrace man in eternal friendship. It was no obstacle to the loving designs of God that that One Man could not accomplish the rôle of Peace-Maker in the tragic war between men and God unless He were God; God was not blocked in His plan of love and forgiveness by the Peace Terms, which demanded that the Mediator, the Peace-Maker, had to be both God and Man. To speak and act for man, He had to be Man; to speak and act for God effectively, He had to be God. But God's love broke down the natural order of things. That natural order said that God was God and could not be man; man was man and could not naturally be God. God, then, instituted a supernatural order of things; He would decree to effect in the world a work above the natural, a supernatural work. He would place in this world a Man who was God.

God formed in the womb of Mary a human body for the Divine Person of the Son of God; God created a human soul to be the principle of human life in that body. God joined that soul and body, made man out of that union,

and decreed that that human nature should eternally be the human nature of the Son of God.

We said that all men were singularly honored when God became a man like unto us. How much more honored was that individual human nature, which was made God's human nature forever. That one gift, the gift of being substantially united to the Person of God, was the highest honor, the greatest grace, which God could give to any created thing.

It is a great gift to receive from God sanctifying grace, which gives us the title to eternal happiness. It is a greater gift to receive from God at the end of life the reward of seeing God face to face, to see God in the way to which God alone is naturally entitled. It was a most wondrous gift which God gave Mary when He made her the Mother of God. But at the pinnacle of all the possible favors which God can bestow on any creature stands the favor which was granted to the human nature of Jesus Christ, when it was made the human nature of God.

We are not surprised, then, that the Holy Trinity worked with loving care over the body and soul, which was the body and soul of God. We rather expect to see God give to that body and soul whatever it was possible for God to give a human body and soul. True, the plan of the Great Reconciliation between sinning men and the offended God would call for sufferings from the God-Man, suffering in soul and body; but God's love for His Son would see to it that the human nature of that Son should be adorned as only a God could adorn it. God's love for us weak, sinful men would see to it that Jesus Christ, our Model, our Friend, the One sent to lead us home to our Father in heaven, should be not only God, Infinitely Perfect, but also the Perfect Man.

We shall now search the Revelation, as explained to us by God's Church, to discover what God's love did for the human nature of Christ.

Human intellect of Christ; not infinite

In the opening chapter it was shown that in Christ there was not only the divine intellect by which He thought with the One, Eternal, Perfect Thought of God, but also a human intellect. We shall see that in its make-up the human intellect of Christ was exactly like ours, that is, created, not uncreated as is His divine mind; limited, not unlimited. The human mind of Christ received, by virtue of its being taken over as the human mind of God, an abundance of divine favors, which enabled it not only to know more than the human intellect naturally can know, but to know things in a new way, a way more perfect than the natural, human way of thinking. But in all its operations it will always be a finite mind, and its operations will always be finite and limited. Only the divine mind is in its make-up infinite, and infinite in its operations.

Beatific knowledge in human mind of Christ

But though limited in itself and its thought, the human mind of Christ received from God all the perfection, natural and supernatural, which God could bestow on a created mind. First among these perfections was the gift of beatific vision, which Christ enjoyed during the whole course of His earthly life.

In this life we naturally know God, but only through creation. We know His existence, because all creation cries out, "I was fashioned by the hands of another." We know His infinite perfections, because each creature, after we have contemplated its strength or its beauty or its wisdom, cries out, "I came from One who has strength and beauty and wisdom which is infinite."

Not only is our natural knowledge of God in this life always drawn from creatures, but even in the life to come we are naturally entitled only to a knowledge of God drawn from creatures. And, though that knowledge would make us happy, still it would not be "seeing God face to face." God has, as a matter of fact, placed as the future and eternal destiny of those who love Him

on earth this reward of seeing God face to face, but it still remains true that it is a reward above our natural demands. That is why we say, in Catholic Theology, that man is destined to a supernatural end—something above the destiny properly due to his nature.

To be able to know God face to face two things are necessary: God must put before the human intellect the infinite being of God as it is in itself; and then God must add to the intellect a new power or capacity, not natural or due to it, but supernatural and beyond the due of the created mind. This new supernatural capacity is called the "light of glory." With it the mind can see God face to face.

The beatific vision awaits men at the end of their life on earth; it is the reward to be given to good living; it will come only when men, after wayfaring through life, have finished the term of probation and have reached the eternal resting place of their home with God. The possession of sanctifying grace in this life gives a man the right to this beatific vision; it makes man an heir to this godlike state, but the right will not be actualized in this life. That is the reward reserved for the life to come.

But Our Lord, Jesus Christ, had this great gift while He was still living on earth; in fact, from the first moment of His existence in the womb of His Mother. In His human intellect He always saw God face to face. Even the blackness of Calvary did not take from Christ the sunlight of God's countenance.

Why beatific knowledge was due to Christ

That Christ during His whole life should see God in this way does not surprise us; we think that it is just how things should be. The human intellect of Christ was God's mind, and it assuredly ought to be adorned with that jewel, which is the greatest possible gift a created mind can receive, the gift of the beatific vision. Were we to ask theologians the reason why Christ had this gift, they would tell us that when we said, "That is just how

things should be; the beatific vision, the highest possible favor God could give to a human intellect, ought to be given to that intellect which has been made the intellect of God," we had hit upon the right answer. The beatific vision was given to Christ, not because of the sanctifying grace possessed by Him from the beginning, not because of the infinite merits of His life, but solely because an intellect which belonged to God as His own, an intellect whose thoughts would always be in very truth the thoughts of God, should be given all the knowledge which God could place in a human intellect.

That Christ had beatific vision is certain doctrine

That this doctrine is a revealed truth is not explicitly and clearly taught by Scripture and Tradition. Nevertheless, in the teaching of the theologians (and the unanimous teaching of the theologians always signifies the mind of the Church), it is advanced as a necessary conclusion from the revelation of the hypostatic union. It is, therefore, to be numbered among the Catholic doctrines which are called certain and common.

Proof of doctrine

The first reason, and for Catholics a sufficient reason, for asserting that Christ always enjoyed the beatific vision, is that the theologians of the Church have constantly taught that this doctrine is a necessary conclusion from the revealed doctrine which says that the human intellect of Christ is God's intellect. The unanimous agreement of theologians in such a conclusion is a certain guide to truth.

No certain proof from Scripture

There does not seem to be any statement of Holy Scripture concerning the gift of beatific vision in the human intellect of Christ which is definite enough to afford a certain proof of the doctrine. The difficulty is not in proving from Scripture that Christ had the beatific vision. Whenever Scripture attributes the divine nature to Christ it at the same time tells us that He had the divine intellect—and with that He always saw God face to face.

No; the difficulty is in advancing a text in which the beatific vision is assigned to the human intellect.

There are, however, some texts which, in all probability, assert our doctrine. We will select one of these texts. In the Gospel of St. John we read, "for the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (I, 17-18). In these words the Evangelist, John, contrasts Christ and Moses. Between Christ, as intermediary between God and man, and Moses as intermediary, there is this difference: Moses, in common with all other mere men, never saw God; the Son of God He hath declared Him. Though John does not explicitly say "The Son of God did see God and hath declared Him," still the contrast would be pointless unless John meant that Moses did not see God, whereas the Son of God did see God. The "seeing God" which is here referred to is "seeing God" face to face, that is, the beatific vision. Moses did see God in the other way, first by reason and then by faith. If, then, Christ saw God in a way in which Moses had not seen Him, Christ must have seen Him with beatific vision.

But it still remains for us to show that Christ saw God face to face, not only with the divine intellect but with the human intellect as well. This, also, seems clear enough from the text. The special point of contrast is between Moses as a Teacher of the Divine Revelation and Christ as the Divine Revealer. John says that Christ as the Divine Revealer saw God. Christ, however, as the Divine Revealer is Christ as Man. So, the fair and just interpretation of this text seems to be that Christ as Man saw God face to face.

The Fathers on the beatific knowledge of Christ

So rarely did the Fathers treat of this question, and in a fashion so meager, that it is impossible to draw an argument from their writings. As we said before, the real proof of the doctrine is had from this, that the-

ologians, all of them, teach that from what Revelation tells us of the God-Man we have to conclude that this favor of the beatific knowledge was granted to His human intellect.

How then could Christ suffer and be sad?

How could Christ be sad, how could He suffer, if He had the beatific vision during His entire life? Should not the beatific vision bring with it a complete and perfect happiness? Should it not lift Him, both in soul and body, above the plane of sadness and suffering?

That all possibility of pain and sadness will be removed from the blessed in heaven, when they will see God face to face, is certain. But of Christ, while still a wayfarer on earth, two facts have to be true: He had the beatific vision in His human intellect, and in His human soul He was subject to sadness and suffering. Both these facts are vouched for by the teaching of the Church. We know, then, that the mind of Christ saw God, and His will felt joy at the vision; at the same time His mind saw His passion and the ingratitude of men, and His will felt sadness over these evils. The ordinary law would, undoubtedly, have removed from His will this sadness; but Christ was living under that extraordinary law which demanded that He suffer. According to that law, therefore, the beatific vision was withheld from overflowing with all its joy-giving effects upon the soul of Christ. Perhaps this holding up or suspending of the ordinary effects of the beatific vision was a miracle in the psychological order; but, whether it was or not, the fact remains that Christ, though gazing upon God continually and rejoicing in that vision, felt sadness at the multitude of evils of body and soul which came upon Him.

Christ had infused knowledge

Infused knowledge is knowledge obtained, not through the ordinary human way—through the senses—but directly from God. Of course, when we speak of God infusing knowledge into a human mind, we do not mean that God puts the actual thought into the mind. The

actual thought is always the operation of the mind; the mind does the thinking. God can no more do my thinking than He can do my walking. No; God is said to infuse knowledge into man's mind when He waives aside the ordinary law which says that our intellectual knowledge must always be started for us and prepared for us from outside the mind; from our senses, whether external such as eyes, ears and touch, or internal such as imagination. He waives aside this ordinary law and declares that He Himself will do the starting and preparing of our thoughts.

If the thoughts which He prepares for us are thoughts about things naturally knowable by the human mind, things which our senses can in some way reach, the knowledge thus prepared by God for us would be infused knowledge. It would be above the natural in regard to the mode in which we should get it, but not above the natural in regard to the things known. But if God prepares thoughts for the human mind about things not naturally knowable by that mind, such as the mystery of the Holy Trinity, or the secrets of hearts, then the knowledge thus had would be above the natural in every way.

Now we put the question, "Did Christ have knowledge infused by God into His human intellect? Or was the knowledge of that intellect limited to ordinary, experimental knowledge, and the beatific knowledge?"

The answer of Catholic Theology to this question is that it is quite likely that Christ did enjoy this sort of knowledge. It is a great favor from God to have knowledge of this sort—and God was prepared to favor the human nature of His Son in every possible way;—it was a favor which had been granted to Adam in the beginning, and it seems fitting that the mind of the Second Adam, Christ, should not lack any perfection possessed by the First Adam. But against these reasons it must be said that in

receiving the gift of the beatific knowledge, the mind of Christ had received a favor which included all the perfection of infused knowledge, and more. The beatific knowledge was more perfect in itself, because with it Christ saw God face to face; it was more perfect in its extent, because with it the mind of Christ knew all that He could have known with infused knowledge, and more.

Christ had also experimental knowledge

We have been looking at the human mind of Christ with the aid of the light of faith. We have seen there so many rich treasures of knowledge which the Holy Trinity in its loving care over the human nature of the Son of God scattered so abundantly, that there may be danger of our being tempted to doubt whether Christ is, after all, like unto us. When Revelation told us, "God became man. He became like all men," we were encouraged, and felt unspeakably consoled with the assurance we had received that, in all truth, God was very near to us, was really one of us. But when that same Revelation unfolded all the gifts God had poured into the mind of the God-Man, gifts to which no mere mortal could aspire, we perhaps began to feel that God was again drawing away from us, that the God-Man was not very much like us, after all.

But our little half-doubt vanishes when that same Revelation turns its light on the home at Nazareth, and shows us a Child Jesus, with a child's mind, beginning, as all our knowledge begins, in the ignorance of childhood, reaching out in its groping way year after year for more knowledge, until with maturity comes the time of wisdom.

Side by side with the beatific knowledge which Christ had from the moment of conception, was the ordinary, step-by-step knowledge which we mere men draw from our experience of the world in which we live.

What that experimental knowledge is we know, its progress we know, since it is the story of a great part of our own lives. We look out at the world with our eyes and draw in knowledge from things we see, from that

world of men, women, children, oceans, rivers, mountains. We listen with our ears, and from a world of sounds increase of knowledge comes to our mind. And so, through every one of our five senses the world sends in the material on which our human knowledge is formed.

The same thing happened to the mind of Jesus. The mind of Christ opened up to the world in proportion as the world revealed itself to Him.

The doctrine is certain

That Christ had experimental knowledge is advanced by the theologians as a certain conclusion of faith.

Proof from Scripture

In the Gospel, Christ is portrayed as a real man, with the faculties of a man. It would be absurd to suppose that these faculties did not act in Him as they did in all other men. His senses came into contact with the world outside, and passed on their knowledge to the mind of Christ; that mind worked on the reports of the outside world sent by the senses, and went through that process of thought which is the ordinary human process. In other words, the mind of Christ acquired experimental knowledge.

Fathers

The tradition of the Church, as found in the teaching of the Fathers, is not sufficiently abundant on this matter of the experimental knowledge of Christ to warrant our drawing an argument from that source.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. If the human intellect of Christ is God's intellect, why is it not infinite?
2. What is meant by beatific knowledge?
3. Why is beatific knowledge not natural to the human intellect?
4. How is a human intellect rendered capable of beatific knowledge?
5. Why do the theologians hold that the human intellect of Christ had beatific knowledge?
6. Show that Scripture, in John I, 17, 18, most probably assigns beatific knowledge to Christ.
7. How could Christ have this beatific knowledge, and at the same time suffer?
8. Did the human intellect of Christ have infused knowledge?
9. What is meant by experimental knowledge?
10. Show that Christ had experimental knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

THE HUMAN WILL OF CHRIST AND THE HOLINESS OF CHRIST

Introduction

We shall now study the perfections of the human will of Christ. That there was a human will in Christ has already been shown in the first chapter. There are two principal questions which concern the will of Christ:

1. The holiness of that will.
2. The freedom of that will.

We shall also give our attention to the question of the fullness of sanctifying grace which was given to Christ.

The will, the highest of human faculties

Were we to line up in order of dignity and worth all the faculties of man, we should have to put in undisputed possession of first place, not man's intellect, but his will. The will is the faculty which makes a man's decisions. As a man uses his free will, he is noble, or base, magnificent or contemptible, a success or a failure. A man can make a success of life though his intellect be of mediocre worth; but a mediocre will leaves man a mere mediocrity. A man is only what his will is. His intellect is the light which flashes out upon the world of opportunities, good or bad, which offer themselves to every man; a man's will picks out the way and directs the progress along that way. The intellect merely tells a man what can be done, and should be done; but to man's will alone belongs the choosing, the real "doing." Without a good will, choosing properly, a man cannot achieve in life the success which God accounts success. The most magnificently built ocean liner, fitted out with an array of engines the best in the world, an unbreakable rudder,

a compass the best that science has devised, a searchlight which could pierce a way through the darkest night, would be a failure if the captain, whose duty it is to guide the ship, should let it go where wind and wave took it, or should sail only where sunshine made the sailing pleasant. Man's will is man's captain.

Since, then, the will is the noblest faculty of man, we feel sure that the Holy Trinity must have given to that human will of Christ a perfection in every way suited to a human will which was to be the will of God Himself.

Christ's will sinless

A man is what his will is. If there is sin in that will, the man himself is a sinner. Sin is failure for the will, and failure for the whole man. Sin is the act of the free will, by which a man makes a choice contrary to the law of God. The law of God is the law by which God tells man the Divine Plan of Things; the Ten Commandments are the divine summary of "Right Choices." The sinner sees what choice is right, but deliberately chooses otherwise. The holy will of Christ was from the beginning to the end absolutely free from sinful choice. Not even venial sin, that choice which displeases God, yet does not break off the friendship with God, even that was not found in Christ. Absolute sinlessness, sinlessness without spot was always His. Even great saints, whose lives not only excluded the weightier, baser sins, but ever fought vigorously against the invasion of the lesser sins, found that their wills, weakened by the original sin, to which their father Adam had made them heir, had admitted little inroads of selfishness, or bitterness, or meanness, or some other of those human failings which make even a great and holy man a bit unlovely. But not so with Christ; sinlessness absolute was always His.

Article of faith

We have been repeating to ourselves so often, since we began our study of Christ, the wonderful truth: "The human nature was God's human nature. The human intellect was God's. The human will was God's." And

so, in our own minds we have no doubt that no sin was ever found in the will of Christ, for the simple reason that it was the human will of God; every action of that will was the action of God. To say that the human will of Christ sinned is to say that God sinned. In other words, we see that if God was made man, God's humanity was sinless.

When we ask the Church, and Scripture, and Tradition for their authoritative word, we are not surprised, then, to hear them repeat as an article of faith the conclusion we ourselves came to: "Christ was absolutely sinless. All sin, actual or original, was excluded from Him." Several Councils have explicitly defined this doctrine. Let us select the statement of the Council of Ephesus, (431 A.D.). In the concluding words of the tenth canon of that Council we read: "If anyone says that He (The Word made Flesh) offered up Himself as an oblation for Himself, and not rather for us alone (for He who never knew sin, needed not oblation), let him be anathema." And Pope Eugene IV in the Decree for the Jacobites (1441 A.D.) defines: ". . . Who (Christ) was conceived without sin, was born and died, and alone, through His death, gained the victory over the enemy of our race by taking away our sins (Decret, pro Jacob.). In the first definition freedom from all sin is insisted upon; in the second definition freedom from original sin is emphasized.

Holy Scripture

In Holy Scripture our first and, of course, our best witness to the sinlessness of Christ is our Divine Lord Himself. In the eighth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, vv. 31-48, Christ is presented pleading with the Jews to believe His word, and chiding them for their unbelief. "Unbelief comes from the father of lies," He says; "belief comes from my Father. Lies and unbelief cannot come from my Father, and only truth can come from me, because my Father is not the father of lies, but the Father in heaven." After saying this, Christ appeals

to His sinlessness as the sign that He came from God, and that He speaks the truth. "Which of you," He says, "shall convince me of sin? If I say the truth, why do you not believe me?" He throws out to them the unanswerable argument of His sinlessless. My sinlessness proves that my Father is the Father in heaven, the Father of Truth.

Here Christ is only repeating what He had before said to the Jews: "I do always the things that please him" (*Ibid.* v. 29).

Long before, the Prophet Isaias had proclaimed the sinlessness of the coming Messias: "He hath done no iniquity, neither was there deceit in his mouth" (LIII, 9).

And after Christ's earthly life was over, and He had ascended to heaven, St. Paul bore testimony to the sinlessness of His Master: "For we have not a high priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin" (Heb. IV, 15).

Fathers

From the abundant testimony of the Fathers we shall select three statements; most clear and sublime in their announcement of the sinlessness of Christ.

St. Augustine: "It was by this [the grace of God] that a man without any antecedent merit was, at the very moment of His existence as man, so united in one person with the Word of God, that the very person who was the Son of man was at the same time Son of God, and the very person who was Son of God was at the same time Son of man; and by the adoption of His human nature into the divine, the grace itself became, in a way, so natural to the man as to leave no room for the entrance of sin" (Enchirid. c. 40).

St. Leo the Great: "For we should not be able to vanquish the author of sin and death, were it not for the fact that our nature was assumed and appropriated by Him,

whom sin cannot sully and death cannot hold" (Epist. ad Flavian. c. 2).

St. Fulgentius: "The Godhead cannot be overcome; therefore also the humanity of Christ remained without sin, because it was assumed into the Godhead, which of its very nature is incapable of committing sin" (Ad Trasam. 3, 29).

Will of Christ could not sin

There never was the least sin in the human will of Christ. Is that the same as to say, "The human will of Christ could not sin"? It is not. To illustrate: suppose a certain man has lived his whole life without ever sinning grievously, does that mean that it was not possible for him to sin? Not at all. At every moral crisis of his life, it was possible for him to sin. So, actual sinlessness does not necessarily imply inability to sin.

Accordingly, we now ask, "Was there in the will of Christ inability to sin?"

The Church teaches as a doctrine which is necessarily connected with the doctrine of the hypostatic union, that there was in Christ an inability to sin. This doctrine, therefore, is to be numbered among the Catholic doctrines which, though not formal articles of faith, are undoubted conclusions from Revelation.

Holy Scripture

Though the actual sinlessness of Christ is stated in Holy Scripture, the impossibility of sin finding its way into the human will of Christ is not clearly asserted.

Fathers

The Fathers did not rest with declaring Christ sinless; with equal vigor they taught what the theologians later taught, that it was impossible for the will of Christ to sin.

Leo the Great says: ". . . Whom [Christ] neither sin could contaminate nor death hold in its power" (Epist. 28. c. 2).

St. Cyril of Alexandria: "All those who maintain that Christ was able to commit sin—I know not how—are

foolish and destitute of reason" (Adv. Anthromorp. c. 22).

Nature of impeccability of Christ

Catholic theologians have made an interesting study of this impeccability in the human will of Christ. They begin by asking, "What is there in Christ which causes the inability to sin?"

The conclusions which they have reached may be summed up briefly as follows:

1. By the mere fact that God made the human nature of Christ the human nature of the Divine Person of His Son, God is obliged to remove from the human will of Christ all the possibility of sin. If the human will of Christ could sin, then it would have to be said that the Son of God could sin. But it would be just as false to say, "The Son of God could sin" as to say, "The Son of God did sin." So, God, by decreeing and bringing about the Incarnation, agreed to render the human will of Christ incapable of sinning.

2. The human will of Christ was made incapable of sinning by reason of the beatific vision. When the infinite beauty and goodness of God as He is in Himself is shown to the mind of man, the will finds perfect happiness in the possession of God; no created good can draw it away from God. Only God and God's will can henceforth influence the will. It is simply impossible for the will to turn away from God by sin.

3. (This third conclusion is held by most theologians, though some of the followers of the theology of Duns Scotus do not admit it.) Even supposing that the beatific vision were not due to a humanity united to a Divine Person, and even supposing that a human will united to a Divine Person did not demand of God the unbroken possession of sanctifying grace, still the mere fact of the hypostatic union would mean that God would have to render the will impeccable by refusing, forever and always, that divine physical co-operation, without which

no human will has the physical ability to sin. This divine physical co-operation is what philosophers call the divine *concursus*.

Was Christ's will free?

Does it not seem, then, that the inability of sinning, which was Christ's, was had at the sacrifice of free will? If Christ could not sin, how could He be said to have had a free will? And if Christ had no free will, how can it be true that He voluntarily, that is freely, suffered and died for us?

Not free to sin

First of all, in the matter of sin, Christ's will was not free; a will which cannot sin is not free to sin.

But otherwise free

But where there was no question of sin, His will was free. His human nature was like ours in all things, sin alone excepted. He suffered for us and redeemed us, not because He was forced to do so, but freely. By His life and death He gained an infinite wealth of merit for us, and offered perfect satisfaction for our sins. Without a human free will, He could not have merited for us or satisfied, because restoration to God's friendship was, according to the plan of God, to be brought about by a man. A man would have to merit; a man had to offer satisfaction. That man, of course, would have to be God, otherwise His actions would not have availed before God for our restoration—but nevertheless, the merits could not have been had without a human free will.

Some have claimed that Our Lord was always bound to act in the most perfect manner possible. He was not free, they say, to choose any course of action except the more perfect.

We have no doubt that Christ did always perform each action in the most perfect manner possible to Him; but that He was not free to do otherwise, seems to be false and without foundation. Even the divine will is not bound to do what is the most perfect. It could certainly have decreed a world more perfect than the present one. But it freely chose to create the present one.

But did not the fact that Christ had the beatific vision force Him to do always what was the more perfect? Was not His will in such complete harmony with the will of God because of the beatific vision as to be incapable of acting except in the most perfect way? Not at all. The Holy Trinity enjoys the same beatific vision, and yet It is not always forced to that which is the more perfect.

"But is it not an imperfection, a sort of sin, to choose the less perfect?" To this we answer again with a decided No. What a hard task-master our God would be if His law was, "No matter how good an action is, if it is not the best you could do, you displease Me." No system of asceticism which was founded on that principle would be tolerated in the Church.

The sanctity of Christ

By sanctity is meant holiness. We speak of holy things, such as chalices, crosses; we speak of holy places, such as churches, the Holy Land; we speak of holy persons, such as the saints, the Blessed Virgin. Is the holiness of a person the same as the holiness of a thing? It is not. In fact, real holiness is in persons only. Real holiness always implies a will which is in harmony with the divine will. God's will is infinitely holy because His infinite mind is eternally contemplating the infinite order of His own being and the order which is proper between creatures and God, and between creatures and creatures, and the divine will is unceasingly approving the divine order of things and unceasingly works to preserve it. The will of a creature is holy insofar as it, too, wills the divine order of things. The highest act of holiness is to love God perfectly. But that act of love is naught else but an act approving the divine essence of God. A rational creature, then, is holy when it wishes what God wishes and loves, and strives to accomplish in itself and in others what God wishes to be accomplished.

Since places and irrational objects in general have not free will, they are not holy in the real sense of holi-

ness. They are merely called holy because they have a close relation to holiness in God or holiness in rational creatures. The sacraments are called holy because they produce holiness in men; chalices, vestments, etc., are called holy, because they are used in those sacred rites from which holiness comes to men.

Now, Christ's will was holy because it always willed what God willed. According to His own words, He always did what His Father wanted. The holiness of Christ stands at the apex of all human holiness. In His will was found a love of God and a harmony with God's will far surpassing that of the greatest saint. Even the will of the Blessed Mother, which never knew sin, and was always in harmony with the will of God, had not the holiness of the human will of Christ.

Fullness of sanctifying grace in Christ

As we shall see later on, there is, besides the holiness of the acts of the will, a state of holiness or an habitual holiness; this is given to the just man through sanctifying grace. This grace gives to our actions a new quality which they never could have had without it; it makes those actions meritorious of the beatific vision; by virtue of this sanctifying grace each of our good actions is a protestation that we want what God wants—above all, we want that which God wants and loves above all things, the beatific vision of the divine essence. Sanctifying grace, then, is the source from which our actions receive their holiness.

But this same sanctifying grace in itself, from the mere fact that it is possessed by a creature, makes that creature holy with a permanent holiness. Holiness is the union with God or the striving for that holiness. In heaven we shall be perfect in holiness, because union with God will be perfect: on earth we have not the beatific vision; our holiness is the striving for that vision. Now, sanctifying grace turns us towards that perfect union. It gives us the right to enter heaven, it makes our nature in some

way like God's. Just as in God's nature there is the infinite demand for eternal love of the divine essence in the beatific vision, so in our nature, because of sanctifying grace, there is a demand for eternal love of the divine essence. Of a man in grace, it can truly be said, "God belongs to him; his nature, elevated by sanctifying grace, has as its only proper destiny and function, to see God face to face, and to be in perfect union with God forever."

God put into the soul of Christ the fullness of sanctifying grace. Next to the gift of the hypostatic union and the gift of the beatific vision, the greatest gift which God could give to a human soul was sanctifying grace. And this grace, in fullness, was given to the soul of the Son of God. Though the grace given was not infinite (it is a created thing, and so, could not be infinite), still it was given to the fullest extent possible to the plan of God.

Doctrine certain

That Christ had the fullness of sanctifying grace is held as a conclusion drawn from Revelation.

Holy Scripture

There is no doubt that Holy Scripture declares that Christ had fullness of grace; ". . . full of grace and truth," says St. John of Christ (I, 14). But no text of Scripture seems to indicate definitely what is meant by the expression "fullness of grace." "Fullness of grace" might mean that holiness which came to the human nature of Our Lord from the mere fact of being united to the Divine Person. From the mere fact of that union, the human nature of Christ was turned towards God and holiness of action, even though sanctifying grace had never been given to it.

Fathers

The Fathers, however, speak of the grace given to Christ as the same grace which we mere men can have, that is, sanctifying grace.

St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "Christ sanctifies Himself, since, as God, He is holy by nature; but, according

to His humanity, He is sanctified together with us, in that . . . He does not hesitate to call us His brethren" (Dial. de SS. Trin. 6).

St. Chrysostom asserts both the existence and superabundance of sanctifying grace in Our Lord: "The full measure of grace has been poured out over that Temple. For He doth not dispense grace according to measure. We have received of His fullness, but that Temple hath received the complete measure of grace" (In Ps. 44, 2).

St. Augustine says: "The Lord Jesus Christ Himself not only gave the Holy Spirit as God, but also received it as man, and therefore He is said to be full of grace, and of the Holy Spirit" (De Trin. 15, 26, 46).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Why is the will the highest of the human faculties?
2. Prove from Scripture that Christ was sinless.
3. How do the theologians show that Christ had not the ability to sin?
4. Reconcile this inability to sin with the freedom of the will of Christ.
5. Did Christ always have to do what was more perfect?
6. In what did the holiness of the human will of Christ consist?
7. Why do we say that sanctifying grace renders a man holy?
8. What measure of sanctifying grace was given to Christ?
9. Does Scripture clearly state that sanctifying grace was given to Christ?
10. Would Christ be holy even though sanctifying grace had not been given to Him? Why?

CHAPTER V

CHRIST REDEEMED US FROM SIN

Importance of doctrine of Redemption

We come now to the discussion of that work of Christ, which, from the viewpoint of its effect on us men, is His supreme work. To remove sin from the soul of man, and give him the means of reaching eternal happiness in the unending and perfect vision of God is the greatest favor which Christ could give us.

When God, in the beginning, created man, He destined him to the beatific vision, and freely granted him all the means of reaching that destiny. Adam received from God, for himself and for all his posterity, all the means of reaching eternal happiness; these means were sanctifying grace, the virtues, and the sincere promise of God to give to mind and will all the actual graces necessary to live in a manner pleasing to God.

But Adam by his sin lost for himself and for us, not only his supernatural destiny, but also supernatural grace and the virtues. Adam had been created with his whole being turned to God; he was fitted out with all the powers needed to keep himself turned to God. If Adam had remained faithful to God, all men would have been born into the world with their whole being turned to God. But the sin of Adam changed it all. All men lost their supernatural destiny and, of course, the powers needed to bring them to that destiny. This deprivation of life of sanctifying grace constituted, as we know, the state of original sin.

To this sin, inherited from Adam, individual men added their own personal sins, and by these sins further offended

the infinite majesty of God, and rendered themselves liable to the eternal punishments of hell.

It is evident, then, that the greatest work which Christ could effect for men would be to take away sin, restore to man his supernatural destiny and the power of reaching it. This work Christ did by the work of Redemption.

God not bound to pardon sin

When originally given, the supernatural destiny of man was a free gift of God; once lost by the sin of Adam, it could be restored only by an equally free gift of God. If God had not wished to restore to man what he had lost, He could, with no injustice whatever, have obliged man to submit to the full penalty of his sin, original and personal.

Many possible modes of pardon

There was a multitude of ways in which God could have removed the sin, which stood between God and man and blocked their friendship. God could have simply and unconditionally pardoned man, and restored him to the state of grace and supernatural destiny. Or, He could have demanded of sinful man himself some sort of reparation, which man would offer up in the form of acts of sorrow and penance. Of course, such reparation would not have been adequate in itself to repair the damage of sin. No act of a mere sinful man could restore the balance which grave sin had disturbed, or compensate for the insult offered to God by sin, because no act of sinful man could honor God as much as sin had dishonored Him. A sin is measured by the dignity of God who is offended; our good acts are measured by our own worth, a worth which is always immeasurably below the dignity of God. Still, God could have agreed to let our attempt at reparation go in His sight as sufficient.

God chose the way of strict satisfaction

What way God actually chose, we can know only from God's own word, Revelation. And Revelation tells us that God's plan was this: There would have to be offered a strict satisfaction, that is, one that fully compensated for the insult given by sin; it would have to honor God as

much as sin had dishonored Him. Moreover, this satisfaction would have to be made by man. But, since no action which man could perform could fully compensate for the insult of sin, man would have to be raised to the plane of the divine; he would have to become divine, in very truth, if he was to give strict satisfaction for sin. So, God decreed that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity should take on Himself a human nature, and by making that human nature the human nature of God, raise all its actions to the plane of the divine. God would agree to let this Man, who was God, take the place of all men and act for all men. The God-Man would take in His hands His passion and death, and offer them up to God as a fitting homage and submission and reparation to the offended God. As soon as God accepted this satisfaction offered by the God-Man, the Redemption would, so far as God was concerned, be complete; it would remain for man to do his part in applying to his own soul the benefits of Christ's work. These benefits were the restoration of a supernatural destiny, the ability to regain sanctifying grace, and the ability to win from God all the helps needed for eternal salvation. These benefits would come to man through certain channels set up by God as the channels through which the divine gifts should flow. These channels were the sacraments, prayer and good works.

This satisfaction was a real Redemption

The satisfaction offered by Christ effected the Redemption of man. Redemption signifies the paying of a price to restore to freedom someone previously in a state of bondage or slavery. Thus, a slave is said to be redeemed when someone by payment of a price buys the freedom of the slave, and makes a free man of him. Now, by sin man was under the bondage of sin. Before sin came, he was in the state of freedom, which meant that he could, with God's grace, reach the beatific vision; but sin took

away that freedom. Christ bought back that freedom, and the price paid was His passion and death.

How satisfaction differs from Redemption

Is the satisfaction of Christ the same thing as the Redemption? The simple answer to this question is that the passion and death of Christ satisfied God and redeemed us. The passion and death satisfied God by repairing the insult given by sin; the passion and death redeemed us by paying the price necessary to free us from the slavery of sin, and to give us back the supernatural destiny and other supernatural gifts which we had lost. Satisfaction looks to God; Redemption looks to man.

Though satisfaction, considered in itself (or, as the theologians say, in the abstract) merely looks to the offended party and compensates for the insult offered by the offense, still, Christ's satisfaction, as actually planned by God and worked out by Christ, could not but produce an immense effect on man. Scripture and Tradition tell us what the actual plan of God was in regard to the satisfaction of Christ. According to Scripture and Tradition, not only would the insult given to God be fully compensated for, but sin would be removed from our souls, the penalty of sin would be taken away from us, our supernatural destiny and sanctifying grace would be restored to us. In brief, the satisfaction of Christ would produce in man a restoration to the supernatural state from which he had fallen by sin. It would produce a restoration from the state of slavery to sin and its penalties to the state of friendship with God in sanctifying grace. This restoration is a true Redemption. So, we say Christ's passion and death gave satisfaction to God and Redemption to us.

Exaggerated ways of speaking of Redemption

We must, however, guard against certain exaggerated expressions in referring to the rôle of Christ in our Redemption. An example of such exaggerated expression is, "Christ assumed the guilt of all the sins of men." This is not true. Christ could not assume the guilt of our

sins. In the first place, the guilt of a sin belongs only to the one who sinned; sin is not transferable. And even though sin were transferable, it could never have been transferred to Christ, who was in reality God.

But may we not say, "The guilt of our sins was not really put on Christ but, by agreement with His Father, Christ consented to be considered as guilty of our sins and deserving of all the punishment due to those sins"? No; we may not say even that. Christ is God, and God cannot be even considered as guilty of our sins and deserving of the penalties due to those sins.

To guard against such exaggerations, it will help to keep in mind what is meant when we say that Christ became our substitute. He is our substitute, not in the sense that He really took on Himself the guilt of our sins and made Himself one who deserved the punishment of those sins; He is our substitute, only in the sense that, by an agreement with God, His acts of reparation, the passion and death, were to be considered as the acts of us men.

The satisfaction was condign

Because the actions of Christ's human nature were the actions of a Divine Person, they had the moral worth of a divine action. Christ's passion and death, though they took place only in His human nature and not in His divine nature, were the actions of God and had divine worth. When, then, Christ offered them up as satisfaction for our sins, they had in them sufficient moral worth to make up for the dishonor inflicted on God by sin. They reached the mark, they were adequate. In fact, they more than reached the mark; they honored God immeasurably more than sin had dishonored Him.

Satisfaction, when it fully compensates for the injury done, is called condign, or adequate. Satisfaction which falls short of fully compensating for the injury done, but is accepted by the offended party as enough, is called congruous satisfaction.

Redemption an article of faith

That Christ really satisfied for our sins and redeemed us, is an article of faith. It is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Catholic Church. The Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) solemnly defined, "If anyone therefore says that [Christ] offered Himself up as a sacrifice for Himself and not rather for us alone, let him be anathema" (Can. 10).

And the Council of Trent (1545 A.D.): "If anyone asserts that this sin of Adam . . . is taken away . . . by any other remedy than the merit of the one Mediator, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, who hath reconciled us to God in His own blood, made unto us justice, sanctification and redemption . . . let him be anathema" (Sess. 5, Can. 3).

Of course, the councils did not explicitly call the satisfaction condign satisfaction. But, once we know that Christ offered up His passion and death for us by way of satisfaction, we have to conclude that, because the satisfaction of a Divine Person was of divine worth in the sight of God, the satisfaction offered by Christ was condign. That it was condign, then, is an undoubted and certain conclusion drawn from Revelation.

Redemption proved from Scripture

It can, without any difficulty, be shown from Holy Scripture that Christ made adequate satisfaction for our sins, and that the satisfaction was accepted by God. There is no need of proving explicitly that God accepted the satisfaction. That will follow from the mere fact that God sent His Son down to die for us; it would have been a divine absurdity—and hence an absolute impossibility—for God not to accept the satisfaction after sending His Son to earth to die for us. That Christ offered up satisfaction for us, that He paid as the price of our Redemption His passion and death, is clear from Scripture.

"Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as gold or silver, from your vain conversation of the tradition of your fathers, but with the precious

blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled" (I Pet. I, 18-19).

"For you are bought with a great price" (I Cor. VI, 20).

"Even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a redemption for many" (Matt. XX, 28).

"For there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man, Jesus Christ. Who gave Himself a redemption for all, a testimony in due times" (I Tim. II, 5-6).

"Who [Jesus Christ] gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and might cleanse to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works" (Tit. II, 14).

"And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (I John II, 2).

Scripture, then, tells us that Christ paid the price necessary to redeem us from all sin; the price paid was His blood. The price was accepted by God, because Scripture does not merely say that Christ offered up the satisfaction for us, but says that, because of Christ's offering, we were actually redeemed. Then, too, the satisfaction of Christ is called a redemption, a buying back. Now, there is no buying back without the full price being paid. The satisfaction of Christ was, then, adequate and complete; the full price was paid.

Fathers

Though the Fathers did not always insist on the fact that the satisfaction was condign, they taught what was of real importance both dogmatically and practically, namely, that there was a real satisfaction for sin offered by Christ and accepted by God.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says: "He [Christ] was not a visible lamb, no mere man, nor yet an angel, but the Incarnate God. The wickedness of sinners was not as great

as the righteousness of Him who died for us. Our sins were not equal to the justice of Him who died for us" (Catech. 13, c. 33).

St. John Chrysostom: "Our experience has been like that of a man who was cast into prison with his wife and children and servants for a debt of ten oboli, and another man came and put down, not only ten oboli, but ten thousand gold talents, and then led the prisoner into the royal chamber, placed him on an exalted throne and allowed him to share in the highest honors. . . . For Christ paid far more than we owed, and in a larger measure, like as the infinite ocean exceeds in magnitude a tiny drop of water" (Hom. in Epis. ad Rom. 10, 2).

A difficulty answered

Naturally, there comes to our mind this difficulty: "If Christ was God, and God was the offended One, does it not seem that, according to the explanation given, God offered satisfaction to Himself?"

The answer to this difficulty is, that one and the same Person gave the satisfaction and received it, but it was in the human nature that He satisfied, and in the divine nature that He received the satisfaction offered.

Fruits of Redemption

As soon as the satisfaction of Christ was completed, it produced an effect, a general effect, which was independent of any co-operation on the part of man. God's attitude to man was changed. As soon as God accepted the satisfaction of Christ, God no longer looked on the human race as estranged from Him, and as having no title to God's friendship, or God's grace, or to eternal happiness. God stands before man reaching out to him all the divine help or grace needed to bring man to the beatific vision.

But for the actual application of these graces to man, his co-operation is needed. For those who have not reached the use of reason, and so cannot co-operate of themselves, the Sacrament of Baptism, conferred by others, will suffice to restore the soul to friendship with

God. For those, however, who have the use of reason, a willing co-operation is required; this co-operation is shown by a use of what are called the means of grace, namely, the sacraments, prayer and good works.

Christ's satisfaction superabundant and infinite

All theologians hold that the satisfaction of Christ was not only enough to compensate for the insult offered to God by our sins, but that it was more than enough. Most theologians hold, too, that the satisfaction of Christ was infinite. By this they do not mean that the actions of Christ, as physical actions, were infinite—as physical actions they were finite actions of a created, finite, human nature. What they mean is that their moral worth, their value in the sight of God is in direct proportion to the dignity of Christ's Divine Person.

Were the passion and death the only satisfactory actions of Christ?

What actions of the life of Christ satisfied for our sins? It is true that any action of Christ was capable of giving adequate satisfaction for our sins. But it is not correct to conclude at once that every action of His life was included in the satisfaction. Only those actions entered into the satisfaction, which were directed by God and Christ to that purpose. God might have selected one single act of the life of Christ, and made that the sum total of the satisfaction to be offered by Christ. Christ is not a substitute for us, except by free decree of God; so no action of Christ is actually satisfactory for our sins except by free decree of God and the will of Christ.

Now, what actions of Christ's life were directed by God and the human will of Christ to satisfy for us? From what Scripture and the Fathers say on the Redemption, two truths stand out: First, Christ offered up all the actions of His life to be satisfaction for us; St. Paul says of Christ, that, entering the world, He at once offered Himself as the one Victim and Holocaust which would please God:

"Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith:

'Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldest not; but a body thou hast fitted to me.

" 'Holocausts for sin did not please thee.

" 'Then said I: "Behold, I come; in the head of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O God." '

"In saying before, *'Sacrifice and oblation and holocausts for sin thou wouldest not, neither are they pleasing to thee'* which are offered according to the law.

" 'Then said I: Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God' ": He taketh away the first, that he may establish that which followeth.

"In the which will, we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once" (Heb. X, 5-10).

His whole life, therefore, was offered by way of satisfaction for us. But from the insistence that is made in Holy Scripture and the Fathers on the passion and death as being our satisfaction, we have to conclude that the actual satisfaction of Christ was His entire life looked at as one complete unit, crowned and consummated by His passion and death.

Relation of descent into hell to the Redemption

That after Christ died on the cross, His human soul descended into hell, is an article of faith. Of course, by the word "hell" is meant, not the place where the souls of the damned are detained, but the place called Limbo, where the souls of the just were awaiting the opening up of the gates of heaven. The fact of this descent into hell is defined in the Fourth Lateran Council (1215 A.D.), "He descended into hell . . . but He descended in soul and arose in flesh, and ascended equally in both" (C. 4).

The same truth is taught in Holy Scripture: In the Fifteenth Psalm we read, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption" (V. 10).

St. Peter applies this text to Our Lord and says, "Foreseeing this, he [David] spoke of the Resurrection of

Christ. For neither was he left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption" (Acts II, 31).

The tradition in support of this truth is most ancient. St. Irenaeus says, "For three days He dwelt in the place where the dead were" (Adv. Haer. 5, 31, 1).

Tertullian says, "Nor did He ascend into the heights of heaven before descending into the lower parts of the earth, that He might there make the patriarchs and prophets partakers of Himself" (De Anima, c. 55).

St. Augustine: "Who but an unbeliever would deny that Christ was in the nether world!" (Epist. 164 ad Evodium, c. 2, 3).

Now, did this descent into hell have any relation to the Redemption? Or, rather, was it a part of the Redemption, so that this action, too, must be included among the actions that redeemed us?

This descent into hell was not in any sense one of the actions from which our redemption came. The Satisfaction and Redemption of Christ was completed with the death of Christ. The descent into hell was part of the application of the fruits of the Redemption. Christ brought to the souls in Limbo the beatific vision; the other joys of heaven would be withheld until Christ at His Ascension would enter heaven. That Christ brought the beatific vision to the souls in Limbo is clear from the words of the promise which He made to the good thief on the cross, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise" (Luke XXIII, 43).

Was the Resurrection part of the Redemption?

Nor was the Resurrection really part of Christ's satisfaction. The Resurrection, just as the descent into hell, was part of the application of the fruits of the Redemption. Christ's Resurrection is the exemplar, the model which all of the just will follow in their own resurrection at the last day. Their bodies will receive the glory received by the body of Christ when He arose. Just as Christ, as the God-Man, using His human nature as an

instrument, gives grace to men through the sacraments, so at the last day, Jesus Christ, using as His instrument His own glorious risen humanity, will cause to rise in similar glory all the bodies of the just.

Christ died for all men without exception

Some Lutherans and Calvinists have tried to darken and constrict the work of the Redemption by teaching that Christ died, not for all men, but only for some, the predestined. The Catholic doctrine is that Christ died for all men. No explicit definition has been given, but the universality of redemption is taught by the whole Church as a doctrine, which is, to say the least, a direct conclusion from what Scripture and Tradition say of the Redemption.

Both Scripture and Tradition say, unhesitatingly, that Christ died for all men.

Holy Scripture

"And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (I John II, 2).

"For, therefore, we labor and are reviled, because we hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful" (I Tim. 4, 10).

St. Paul says that the extent of the Redemption is the same as the extent of original sin, that is to say, universal: "For by a man came death and by a man the resurrection of the dead.

"And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive" (I Cor. XV, 21-23).

Fathers

St. Ambrose: "The mercy of God fills the earth, because remission of sins is given to all. The sun is bid to rise for all. And the sun rises each day for all. That other sun, the Mystical Sun of justice, has risen for all, came to all, suffered for all, rose from the dead for all, but He suffered for all for the purpose of taking away the sin of the world" (Serm. 8, 57).

St. Leo the Great: "Because Our Lord, the Destroyer

of sin and death, found no one free from sin, so He came to free all'' (Serm. 21, de Nativ. 1, 1).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Explain the importance of the Redemption.
2. What is satisfaction for sin? Condign satisfaction?
3. Why could not a mere man give condign satisfaction?
4. How was it possible for Christ to satisfy for our sins?
5. Explain the difference between the notion of satisfaction and the notion of Redemption.
6. Prove from Scripture that Christ satisfied for sin and redeemed us.
7. What is the relation between the Descent into Hell and the Redemption?
8. What is the relation between the Resurrection and the Redemption?
9. What benefits came to man from the Redemption?
10. What actions of the life of Christ redeemed us?

CHAPTER VI

THE MERITS OF CHRIST
CHRIST PRIEST, PROPHET AND KING

Introduction

The satisfaction which Christ paid to God meant, as was seen in the preceding chapter, that our Divine Substitute had from the very beginning directed His whole life, every act from the Conception to the grave, to the repairing of the insult given to God by sin. As that life began, He, the Mediator, standing between God and man as Peacemaker, said of that life upon which He was entering, that it would be one vast act of honoring God as God should be honored. He, the Son of God, would pay honor to His Father by these acts of His human life, but in such a way that all the acts of that life would be, by virtue of the divine substitution, considered the acts of all men. In Christ all men would honor God as He should be honored. All men would, through Him, pay to God as much honor as they had paid Him dishonor by their sins. The insult of sin would be wiped out; God would cross off the handwriting written against man's name, the handwriting which said that men were sinners and subject to the punishment of sin.

This was the meaning of the satisfaction offered by Christ. It looked first and foremost to God. Sin had wronged God; the satisfaction righted the wrong. God had demanded that man, who had sinned, should undo what he had done. Our Substitute, standing by divine agreement in our place, righted the wrong for us.

But, though the satisfaction for an injury done another, of itself, affects only the injured party, inasmuch as he receives a compensation for the injury done, still

the acceptation of the satisfaction by the injured party may often imply that benefits come to the one who is offering satisfaction for the offense which he committed.

In the case of the satisfaction of Christ this was undoubtedly true; men received an immense wealth of benefit. The satisfaction was accepted, we were restored to our supernatural destiny. If we used those means of grace, by which the satisfaction was to be applied to our souls, sin, both original and personal, would be removed from our souls; the penalty of sin would be taken from us; sanctifying grace would be given back to us, and with it all the actual graces necessary to aid us in preserving that grace and living a life meritorious in the sight of God.

Christ merited for us

So much for the satisfactory value of the life and death of Christ. But there is another power in the human actions of Christ. That power is the meritorious force of all His free human actions. A man is said to merit a reward from another when he freely confers some benefit on the other. So, a man acts meritoriously in regard to other men when he freely aids them in their sickness and poverty. Of course, no benefit can be given to God in the same sense in which it can be given to men. Nothing can be added to God's infinite perfection; God cannot be intrinsically benefited. But the very purpose of the life of all rational creatures is to give something to God—external glory we call it—which consists in so harmonizing our lives with the divine will that these lives become a continual act of love and praise of God. Men can, by giving this external glory to God, merit a reward from God.

Christ as Man, that is, by His human actions, merited a reward from God. The human actions of Christ gave God supreme external glory. No human life, no angelic life, ever reflected God's holy will as did the human life of Jesus Christ. It must strictly be borne in mind that

Christ merited by his free, human acts

Christ was not able to merit by any of the actions of the divine nature. That would be the same as to say that God could deserve merit from Himself. Christ merited through the free actions of His human nature. Through them He gave to God that external glory which is given to God by every free act of human obedience and service. Though it was the Divine Person who did the meriting, it was through His human nature alone, and not the divine nature, that the meriting was done. Just as a Divine Person could offer satisfaction to God through His human actions, so a Divine Person could merit reward from God through His human actions. God, in turn, rewarded the human actions of Christ. He could not, of course, make this reward one which would be given to Christ in His divine nature, because the divine nature cannot be rewarded by God;—that would once more be the same as to say that God could reward God. But God could reward Christ in His human nature. He could add glory to Christ as Man by causing His name to be glorified and exalted in time by men, and in eternity by angels and men; or by giving to His human body the reward of a glorious resurrection from the dead, or the gifts of a glorified body, such as impassibility (the freedom from power to suffer), agility (the power of moving from place to place in an instant), and many other gifts by which that body could be made more and more perfect. There was, too, as we shall see from Revelation, another way in which God could meet the demands of the meritorious value of Christ's actions. He could agree to have the merit of those actions applied to us men; Christ would be our Substitute in meriting before God, just as He was our Substitute before God in offering satisfaction for our sins and their penalty.

The rewards which were given to Christ and us

Revelation assures us that Christ did merit through His human actions. The reward due to the meritorious actions of Christ was given to Christ Himself and to us

He Himself received as His reward the glorification of His name in time and eternity by angels and men; He received as His reward the resurrection of His body, and the bestowal on that body at its resurrection of those gifts which made it a glorified body.

We, too, received of the divine treasures which God dispensed as the reward of Christ. God agreed to have the merits of Christ applied to us, and so to us came the restoration to sanctifying grace, the grant of actual graces not only in the measure of sufficiency, but in the measure of superabundance.

Some of these gifts, most of them, came to us also from the mere fact of the satisfaction. We received them on another title besides—that of merit. But while the satisfaction of Christ won for us the sufficient means of salvation, if we look at satisfaction merely as satisfaction, the same satisfaction looked at as meritorious won for us the superabundance of those means.

Christ did not merit after death

Christ merited through the free actions of His human life from the time of His conception until the moment of death. The time of merit is, according to the plan of God, only the time of this life, from the time when the will first begins to act freely until death comes. As soon as Christ's soul was separated from His body, Christ merited no more. Christ dying was still able to merit, Christ dead could merit no more.

Christ merited exaltation of His name and the glorious resurrection

All theologians hold it to be a certain conclusion from Revelation that Christ merited the exaltation of His name in time and eternity by angels and by men. This truth follows from various statements in Holy Scripture:

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that through the grace of God he might taste death for all" (Heb. II, 9).

"He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death even to the death of the cross.

"For which cause God also hath exalted him and hath given him a name which is above all names.

"That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth.

"And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Philip II, 8-12).

Christ merited for us all graces

The Church has always taught that the satisfaction of Christ was a meritorious satisfaction for sin. In speaking of the benefits which were brought to man, in the way of supernatural gifts, the Church does not distinguish between gifts which came from the satisfaction of Christ and others which came from the merits of Christ. She simply says of the graces God has given mankind, that they come from the meritorious satisfaction of Christ.

Holy Scripture

Holy Scripture, in speaking of the graces of the supernatural life which God gives us, says that they are gifts given to us because of the life and death of Christ; that is, Christ merited them for us. In the fifth chapter of St. Paul's letter to the Romans, Paul makes the general assertion that all grace, which is granted, whether for remission of sin or continuance in the state of grace, is a gift granted because of Christ:

"Christ died for us, much more therefore, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him" (v. 9).

"But not as the offense so also the gift. For if by the offense of one, many died, much more the grace of God and the gift, by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (v. 15).

"That as sin hath reigned to death, so also grace might reign to justice, unto life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 21).

Fathers

The Fathers looked on the satisfaction of Christ as meritorious. In speaking of the fruits of the Redemption, they did not divide these fruits into two classes, as though one class come from the satisfactory value, the other from the meritorious value of the actions of Christ. They simply say that fruits of salvation come to us as gifts granted because of Christ's life, passion and death. There is no need, then, of repeating their testimony here. We saw what their testimony was in regard to the satisfactory value of Christ's actions and its benefit to men; that same testimony points also to the meritorious value of the actions of Christ.

Christ's merit infinite; condign; superabundant

The meritorious value of any action of Christ is measured by the infinite worth of His Divine Person. So, the meritorious value of His actions was infinite. The merit was also condign. Condign merit is merit which demands in justice that the reward be given; the reward is not above the demands of the merit. It is evident that the reward given to the human nature of Christ, or to us men because of Christ, was not above the demand of His merits. In fact, the merits of Christ, because their worth was in direct proportion to the infinite worth of His Divine Person, always outweighed what God could actually give to man. So, the merits of Christ are not only adequate to the reward given, but they are more than adequate: they are superabundant.

Priesthood of Christ

The proper office of a priest is to stand as the official mediator between God and man, and offer up to God a sacrifice for sin. This means that the priest must be set apart for the service of God; as a priest, he is segregated from profane things and dedicated to what is sacred. This dedication to what is sacred is had by what is called consecration. Whether that consecration takes the form of a mere appointment to the priesthood by legitimate authority, or the form of a strict religious rite, the mean-

ing intended is the same, the priest is set apart for sacred things.

Christ was truly a priest—the High Priest of all mankind. He was set apart, dedicated to the work of offering up the Sacrifice for the sins of all men. This consecration was not done by mere appointment, not by the anointing with sacred oil as is done to the priests of the Church, but by the act of the Most Holy Trinity accomplishing the hypostatic union—that act which dedicated and handed over to the Second Person a human nature, and dedicated the God-Man to the Supreme Priesthood. Christ, set apart from all profane things, as the High Priest of all mankind, offered up on the Cross the Great Sacrifice for sin, and by that Sacrifice gave due honor to God, and repaired the insult offered to God by the sins of men.

Article of faith

The Church teaches as an article of faith that Christ is a true High Priest. The Council of Trent defines:

"Forasmuch as, under the former Testament, according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, there was no perfection, because of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood; there was need, God the Father of mercies so ordaining, that another priest should rise, according to the order of Melchisedech, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who might consummate, and lead to what is perfect, as many as were to be sanctified" (Sess. 22, c. 1).

Holy Scripture

From what Scripture says of the office of Christ, who as our Mediator satisfied for our sins by His death on the Cross, it is clear that there is a real priesthood in Christ. His death was a real sacrifice offered up to God for our sins by one who had been set apart for that office by God Himself. But Holy Scripture refers so explicitly to the priesthood of Christ that it is but proper to advance scriptural statements of this priesthood. The first ten chapters of the letter of St. Paul to the Hebrews is nothing but a portrayal of the Priesthood of Christ. The Jews,

under stress of persecution, are called upon by Paul to find their strength and courage in the thought that all the priests of the Old Law, and all the priestly sacrifices of the Old Law, were but the shadow of the Real Priest and the Real Sacrifice, from which all dignity of priesthood and all the worth of all sacrifice comes, the Priesthood and the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Christ, the Prophet

Christ is the Prophet of mankind. By prophet is meant a teacher, who in the authority of God speaks to men. Just as the Priesthood of Christ is the culmination of all priesthood, so is His office of Prophet the culmination of all teaching. He is the Prophet of Prophets. The divine messages taught in the Old Law to the people, from the time of Adam to the time of the Baptist, were but the prelude to the Great Lesson which the Great Teacher would teach mankind. The teachers of the Old Law taught with an authority which was merely delegated, borrowed from God; Christ would teach in His own authority, and that authority would be divine.

In the first volume of this series it was shown that Christ was the Teacher sent by God to bring to man the full and complete revelation of God. There is, then, no need to repeat from Scripture statements showing Christ's teaching office. We shall merely quote here two statements of Christ concerning Himself as the Great Teacher of mankind.

"Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, Christ" (Matt. XXIII, 10).

To Pilate He said:

"For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John XVIII, 37).

Fathers

As to the Fathers, they with one voice acknowledge Christ as the Supreme Teacher. Let us quote as typical of this acknowledgment these statements:

St. Clement of Rome: "This is the way, beloved, in which we find our salvation, Jesus Christ. . . . Through Him we see the heights of heaven; . . . through Him are the eyes of our heart opened; through Him does our mind, unwise and darkened, come unto light; through Him Our Lord wishes us to taste immortal knowledge" (Epist. 1 ad Cor. 36, 1, 2).

St. Irenaeus: "Thus also He was an Elder among elders, in order to be a perfect Master in all things, not in setting forth the truth only, but in age too, sanctifying the elder persons as well, becoming an example to them also" (Adv. Haer. 2, 22-24).

Christ the King

That Christ as God had supreme dominion over all men and all things is clear. But it is also true that Christ as man had the same dominion over all things. By reason of the hypostatic union, Christ as Man had supreme jurisdiction or ruling power over all men, in matters spiritual and in matters temporal. He is King of all men. True it is, that by His words "My kingdom is not of this world" (John XVIII, 36), He showed that it was not His intention to exercise His kingship in matters purely temporal. The rule of temporal matters He would leave to the rulers of the various civil states and societies; but He in no way abdicated His supreme power in these temporal matters, He merely chose not to exercise it. Nor in giving power to His Church to make laws, to pass judgment, to execute laws, did He grant that Church any power whatsoever in purely temporal matters. Just as He Himself during His life exercised only His right in spiritual matters, so He granted to His Church merely the right in spiritual matters.

Holy Scripture

In searching Holy Scripture for indications of the Kingship of Christ as man, we shall merely look for statements which assert that as man He had supreme dominion over all things on earth. That Christ as God had such dominion follows from every statement in Scripture in which is declared the supreme dominion of God.

Scripture assigns to Christ as man a Kingship that is universal over all things and men.

"But I am appointed king by him over Sion, his holy mountain, preaching his commandment.

"The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.

"Ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. II, 6-9).

"For he must reign 'until he hath put all his enemies under his feet.'

"And the enemy death shall be destroyed last, 'for he hath put all things under his feet'" (I Cor. XV, 25, 26).

Fathers

The Fathers commonly teach the fact of the universal Kingship of Christ.

St. Athanasius: "It is He who judges the whole world, the true King of all, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Apol. ad Const. n. 26).

St. Cyril of Alexandria: "Christ was King and Lord of the world. And He made this clear to us when He said, 'All power is given to me in heaven and on earth.' For though as God He had power over all things, He says that, because of the flesh that ministered unto Him, that which He had as God was given to Him" (In Is. 1.3; t.5, c.41, v.27).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by saying that Christ merited for us?
2. What actions of Christ were meritorious?
3. What reward did Christ merit for Himself? Prove from Scripture.
4. What reward did Christ merit for men? Prove from Scripture.
5. Why are the merits of Christ called infinite? Why condign? Why superabundant?
6. What is meant by the Priesthood of Christ?
7. Prove from Scripture that Christ was our High Priest.
8. What is meant by the expression "Christ the Prophet"?
9. Prove from Scripture that Christ was our Prophet.
10. Explain the Kingship of Christ. Prove from Scripture.

CHAPTER VII

THE WORSHIP OF CHRIST

Introduction

Thus far, our study of Christ, the Redeemer, has been centered on the two questions: What is Christ? What did He accomplish for the human race by the work of the Redemption? In this chapter we shall consider the duty which men have of worshiping Christ.

Worship is an indication of our belief

It would not be at all an exaggeration to say that the question of the worship of Christ is of equal importance with the other questions hitherto treated. As a man worships, so does he believe. What men believe concerning Christ is shown by their attitude to Him when they come to perform acts of religious worship. One could formulate the multitude of beliefs or disbeliefs of the various Christian churches concerning Christ by merely attending their religious services, and noting the place accorded to Jesus Christ in their religious rites. Such a survey would manifest with startling clearness that Christians do not all look at Christ with one and the same mind. In private conversation a man may call Christ divine; he may, even in written books, call Him divine; but the final test comes when he pays his acts of homage to God. If he does not pay to Christ the same worship which he pays to God the Father, his actions belie his words. His words say that Christ is divine, but his actions say that Christ is not God. One who believes that Christ is divine, believes that He is God; and one who believes that He is God will give to Christ the worship due to God.

All Christians in their divine worship show at least a reverential respect for Christ. Some reverence Him because, as they say, He was the holiest man the world has

ever seen; but they deny that He was truly God. In the churches of such men, Christ has no place as the object of divine worship. The pulpits of these churches will speak reverently of Him, will call Him a great Teacher of Truth and Morals, but when the congregation falls to worshiping God, the person of Christ will disappear. Others seem to think more of Christ and give more honor to Him. They will call Him the Son of God, our Intercessor with God, our Model; they will even call Him divine. But when their belief concerning Christ is put to the test of worship, it becomes clear that they do not believe that the same worship due to God the Father is due to Christ. When their lips called Christ the Son of God, they did not really mean that Christ had the same divine nature as the Father; and when their lips called Christ divine, they merely meant that His life reflected God in an eminent degree; but it was only a reflection of Divine Life, it was not the Divine Life itself.

Worship is the acid test of belief in Christ. The man who believes that Christ is true God will unhesitatingly kneel down and adore Him as God. Since this is true, it is of greatest importance for Catholics to understand what Revelation teaches to be the worship due to Jesus Christ. A clear understanding of all the worship in our Church, whether of God or of the saints, or of relics and images, is necessary not only for our own good, but to help us to clear away the misunderstanding in the minds of so many non-Catholics in regard to the worship practiced in the Catholic Church. Many non-Catholics are, apparently—and yet unreasonably—shocked at the various devotions practiced by Catholics.

Nature of worship

Let us first put down certain preliminary notions, or rather, definitions of worship. If we take the word "worship" in its general sense, it means a reverential respect paid to another because of some superior excellence. This reverential respect can be shown, not only to God be-

cause of His divine excellence, but to man also because of some eminent human excellence. True it is, that the word "worship" is most frequently limited to reverence paid to another because of a supernatural excellence; yet it remains true that mere human excellence deserves the show of reverence and respect, and that the word "worship" properly applies to the acts by which this respect is shown.

But, as is evident, we are not now interested in any worship except that which is shown because of supernatural excellence; we are interested only in religious worship.

Religious worship, then, is worship shown to another because of supernatural excellence, such as eminent sanctity, or some special favor from God. There are three kinds of religious worship: Latria, Dulia and Hyperdulia.

Three kinds of worship

Latria is the worship due to God alone because of His infinite excellence.

Dulia is the worship due to angels and saints because of their great, though created and limited, holiness.

Hyperdulia is the worship due to the Mother of God because of her holiness, which, though not infinite, nevertheless, far surpasses the holiness of all other created persons.

(The Latin word *adoratio* seems to coincide with our English word "worship." But the English word "adoration" is more commonly used only of the worship of God. That explains why Catholics say that they "adore" God and "worship" the saints and angels. The word "adore" is usually reserved to indicate worship of God; the word "worship" is used of God and creatures.)

There is really no essential difference between the worship given to the Mother of God and that given to the angels and saints; the distinction is made merely to emphasize by how much the sanctity of Mary surpasses the sanctity of angels and saints.

Absolute and relative worship

Religious worship is either absolute or relative. It is absolute when the supernatural excellence, which is the reason of the act of worship, is really possessed by the object of the worship. Thus, when we worship God the Father, our worship is absolute; the infinite excellence, which is the reason of our worship, is possessed by God.

Worship is relative when these two conditions are true:

1. The supernatural excellence, which is the reason of our worship, is not possessed by the object worshiped.

2. The thing worshiped has a close, accidental connection, a moral connection, with the person who possesses the supernatural excellence.

Thus, the relic of the True Cross is worshiped with only relative worship because, first, the infinite excellence of Christ, which is the reason of our worship, is not in the relic of the Cross but only in Christ; secondly, the Cross was brought into a close, accidental and moral connection with the death of the Son of God.

In this question of worship a distinction of special importance lies in the distinction between what is called the material object of the worship and the formal object.

Material object of worship

By the material object of worship is meant the person or thing worshiped. Thus, when we worship the Holy Trinity, the material object is the Holy Trinity; when we worship the relic of the Cross, the material object is the relic of the Cross.

Formal object of worship

By the formal object is meant the objective reason for which worship is properly given, that is, the supernatural excellence.

In absolute worship, the formal object (the supernatural excellence) is found in the material object (the person worshiped); thus, when we worship the Holy Trinity, the formal object (the infinite excellence of God) is found in the material object (the Holy Trinity). In relative worship the formal object is not found in the material object, but is found in the person who possesses

the supernatural excellence. Thus, when we worship the relic of the True Cross, the formal object of our worship is the divine excellence; but this is found, not in the Cross, but in Christ.

With these preliminary notions in mind, we now approach the question of the worship due to Christ.

Divine adoration due to Christ as God

First of all, if we consider the Word, or Logos, or Second Person of the Blessed Trinity as such, that is, as God, and put aside all question of the human nature, the worship to be rendered is identical with the worship due the One True God. From all eternity—at the Incarnation and forever afterwards—the Word must be worshiped in this way.

Divine adoration due to Christ as the God-Man

But is Christ the God-Man, that is, Christ as possessing two natures, human and divine, to be worshiped with the worship due to God alone? The Church teaches it to be of faith that Christ the God-Man is entitled to the divine worship which is given to the True God. This was clearly defined in the Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) and in the Second Council of Constantinople (553 A.D.):

"If anyone dare to assert that the man assumed into the Divine Logos must be adored as a Person distinct from the Logos . . . and that Emmanuel is not worshiped by one and the same act . . . according as the Word was made flesh, let him be anathema" (Conc. Ephes. can. 8).

"If anyone say that Christ is adored in two natures, and so introduce two adorations, separately given, one to the Word, the other to the man, . . . or if anyone do not adore God the Word Incarnate together with His own flesh by one act of worship . . . let him be anathema" (Conc. Constant. II; can. 9).

Holy Scripture

Christ, the God-Man, is presented to us in Scripture as the proper object of divine worship. Christ Himself lays clear claim to it when He commands all men to honor the Son as they honor the Father:

"That all men may honor the Son as they honor the

Father; he who honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who hath sent him'' (John V, 23).

St. Paul sets Christ apart from all mere creatures. He is God's Son as no mere creature can be; He is begotten of the Father as no mere creature can be said to be; in short, Paul teaches that the God-Man is to be worshiped as no mere creature can be worshiped.

This setting Christ apart from all creatures, and assigning to Him the worship due to God alone is had in the first chapter of the Letter to the Hebrews:

''God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all

''In these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world.

''Who being the brightness of his glory and the figure of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sins, sitteth on the right hand of the majesty on high.

''Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they.

''For to which of the angels hath he said at any time: 'Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee'? And again, 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son'?

''And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith: 'And let all the angels of God adore him.'

''And to the angels indeed he saith: 'He that maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire.'

''But to the Son: 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of justice is the scepter of thy kingdom.'

''Thou hast loved justice and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

"And: 'Thou in the beginning, O Lord, didst found the earth: and the works of thy hands are the heavens.

" 'They shall perish, but thou shalt continue: and they shall all grow old as a garment.

" 'And as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the selfsame, and thy years shall not fail.'

"But to which of the angels said he at any time: 'Sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool'?

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" (Chapter IX).

Fathers

The universal testimony of the Fathers is that Christ, as God-Man, is to be adored in the same way as God Himself. St. Athanasius says: "We by no means adore a creature; this is an error of the heathen and the Arians. But we do adore the Lord of the creature, the Word of God made flesh. For, although the flesh is of itself something created, it has been made the body of God. But in adoring this body we do not separate it from the Logos, nor, when we want to adore the Logos, do we separate Him from His flesh . . . who is there so mad as to say, 'Stand apart from the body, that I may worship Thee' " (Epist. ad Adelph. n. 3).

St. Epiphanius says: "Let no one say to the Only-Begotten One: 'Put away Thy body that I may adore Thee,' but adore the Only-Begotten One with the body, the Uncreated One with the temple which He assumed at His descent" (Ancor. 4).

Is the humanity of Christ worthy of divine worship?

Another question arises as to the worship of Christ. Is the humanity of Christ entitled to divine worship? We answer that the humanity of Christ, in itself, though not for itself, is the proper object of divine worship.

To make the question clear, let us put it this way. We have just now shown that Christ as the God-Man, Christ

as having two natures, is to be adored with the same adoration which would have been accorded to Him had He never taken on Himself humanity. We adore the entire Person Christ as He exists, with divinity and humanity. In this way the humanity, as part of the entire Person Christ, is adored with divine worship. But the direct worship is given to the Person Christ; only indirectly is the human part of Him adored. Now we are asking, "Can the sacred humanity, in itself, be the direct object of worship that is divine?"

Again our answer is affirmative. Though not defined, it is at least a certain conclusion from Revelation.

When we say that the humanity of Christ is worthy of divine worship in itself but not because of itself, what we mean is this:

1. The humanity is not to be worshiped for its own sake as though that humanity, looked at as separated from the Divine Person, has in itself divine excellence. That would be false because the humanity of Christ is, in itself, entirely finite and created.

2. The humanity of Christ, considered with no relation to the Divine Person, is not to be adored with divine worship, because when we cast aside, even mentally, the relation to the Divine Person, we cast aside all divine excellence, and hence any ground for true divine adoration.

3. In saying that the humanity can be made the direct object of divine adoration, we mean that, looking at that humanity directly, we see that it is substantially united to the Divinity, and becomes a genuine object of real divine worship. Its Personality is divine; the Person by whom the human nature is possessed is the Son of God; just as we may and must say of the divine nature, "It is the nature of God," so we may and must say of the human nature, "It is the nature of God."

4. The formal object or reason of all worship of Christ

or anything that belongs to Him is always the same, His infinite excellence.

5. The material object of the worship of Christ is ultimately the entire Christ, the Divine Person. But in the entire Christ there are two natures; each nature has as its own the Divine Personality. Each nature, then, looked at as being the nature of God, may be made the separate material object of divine worship.

Certain doctrine

That the humanity of Christ in itself, because of its being a part of the entire Christ, can be directly adored, is held by theologians to be at least a certain conclusion from Revelation.

Holy Scripture

Holy Scripture, as we saw in the discussion of the worship of the God-Man taken in His entirety, is clear in attributing to Christ, as God-Man, the right to divine adoration. From this teaching of Scripture it follows that the human nature, because it is the nature of God, shares the rights of divine adoration with the divine nature; it, too, is part of the Divine Person Christ. It follows also that it is proper to select either the divine nature or the human nature and directly adore it as belonging personally to the Divine Person.

Fathers

The Fathers teach that the sacred humanity of Christ in itself is adorable with divine worship because it is the human nature of God.

St. John Damascene: "Nor do we deny that His flesh is to be adored; since it is adored in the One Person of the Word" (De Fide Orth. 3. c. 8).

St. Athanasius: "But you say again, we do not give adoration to a creature. O fools, why do you not understand that the body of the Lord which was made does not receive the adoration of a creature, for it is become the body of the Uncreated Word, and to Him whose body it is become you offer your worship. It is therefore adored as it ought to be, and it is divinely adored, for the Word is God, whose own body it is" (Contra Apollin. 1, 6).

Adoration of the humanity is absolute, not relative

We have shown that the sacred humanity of Christ, looked at as the sacred humanity of God, is the proper object of divine worship. This worship is absolute. The infinite perfection of God is not really in the humanity; nevertheless, that sacred humanity has not a mere accidental relation to the Divine Person, such as the Cross has. The humanity is part of the Divine Person, the Cross was not. The humanity was in real, substantial, personal connection with the Divine Personality.

All the parts of Christ's humanity adorable

The reason why the humanity of Christ can be the object of divine worship is that it is God's humanity; it has the Divine Personality as its own. It is equally true of the various portions of the sacred humanity that, because of their personal union with the Divine Person, they, too, can be made the objects of divine worship. This is the theological reason behind the various devotions in the Catholic Church, which center around the humanity of Our Lord—the Devotion to the Five Wounds, the Devotion to the Sacred Head, the Devotion to the Sacred Heart. Of course, the Church does not sanction and approve of each individual selecting at random some portion of the sacred humanity, and making it the object of his worship. As common sense and reverence dictate, there should be some special and proper reason for singling out one part rather than another. Certain parts of Our Lord's humanity are more suited than others to manifest God's mercy and love for us, and more suited to excite in us feelings of love, repentance, courage, etc. So, the Five Wounds of Our Lord's body are made the special object of worship, because they are a visible proof of the love Christ had for us; the Sacred Head is selected as the special object of another form of devotion because that head, crowned with thorns, is another striking manifestation of the extent of God's love for us. But we must remember that divine worship is given to the sacred

humanity, either in whole or in part, always and only because it is the humanity of a Divine Person.

Theology of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart

The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is so widespread in the Church, and has received such undoubted approbation and encouragement from the Church, that it is proper to give special treatment to this devotion.

It is not our purpose to trace the historical origin of the present form of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart. Our purpose is merely theological; to make clear the revealed doctrines on which the devotion is founded, and to explain briefly the present form of the devotion.

That the historical origin of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart as had today is due not only to St. Margaret Mary and to St. John Eudes, who is rightly called the author of the liturgical cult of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, but to others who, in one way or another, participated in that age-long unfolding of the revelation of the infinite adorableness of our God, Jesus Christ, cannot be denied. But that the present form of the devotion is based on the lines indicated by Our Lord in His revelation to St. Margaret Mary is equally true.

In the seventeenth century there was a private revelation made by Our Lord to a Visitandine Nun, St. Margaret Mary, in which Our Lord urged the devotion to His Sacred Heart and outlined a form of devotion. The Church took occasion from this private revelation to give to the Devotion to the Sacred Heart a definite public form. It would be false to say that the devotion originated from, or is founded on, the private revelation made to St. Margaret Mary. It is founded on the public revelation made by Christ to the Apostles, and in particular on the doctrine that the humanity of Christ with all its parts is the humanity of a Divine Person, and is by that fact raised to divine dignity. The substance, then, of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart rests on the revelation made by Christ to the Apostles. The Church may, at any

time, determine what public and liturgical form a devotion shall have. And the Church took occasion from the private revelation given to St. Margaret Mary to give to the Devotion to the Sacred Heart the form indicated in that private revelation. Neither the devotion itself, nor its present form, is based authoritatively on that private revelation; the devotion itself is founded on the public revelation made by Christ to the Apostles, the present form comes authoritatively from the the approbation of the Church.

Formal and material object of the Devotion

We shall now take a glance at the essential features of the public devotion to the Sacred Heart, as sanctioned by the Church today. It is true that all worship of any portion of the sacred humanity of Christ always has as its background the entire Person of Christ. In all devotions referring to the sacred humanity, the ultimate object worshiped is the Divine Person. This must be true, then, of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart. But it is equally true that the object which is directly worshiped is that particular portion of the Divine Person which each devotion selects for the particular object of its worship. In the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, the object directly worshiped is the Heart of Jesus. The material object, therefore, is the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The worship given to the Heart of Jesus is divine worship, the worship due to God alone. It is, moreover, absolute worship, not merely relative. We adore the Heart of Jesus because it has infinite excellence; the infinite excellence of the Divine Person belongs to it, because the Son of God, by the hypostatic union, has given to the entire human nature the infinite excellence of His Divine Person. This does not mean, of course, that if we consider the Heart of Jesus in itself, without respect to the Divine Personality, we could find in that Heart anything of infinite excellence; but it does mean that, when the Son of God took human nature as His own,

the Divine Personality belonged to this humanity and to every part of it. The formal object, therefore, of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, is the divine excellence of the Divine Person Jesus Christ.

Material object is physical Heart as symbolizing God's love for us

The common teaching among writers on the subject today is that the object of the worship is the physical Heart of Jesus as symbolizing the love of God for us—His human love as well as His divine love.

Why has the Heart of Jesus been selected as most fitted to symbolize God's love for us? Was it because the human heart is the organ in which love is elicited? It is true that the Heart of Jesus was selected as most fitted to symbolize Christ's love for us, but it would be untrue to say that this selection is made on the supposition that the heart is the organ in which love takes place. The love of Christ for us, which is symbolized by His heart is, first, His divine love—that divine love is certainly not elicited by His human heart; secondly, His human love. Now, human love is both spiritual and sensitive; the spiritual is elicited by the will, the sensitive is elicited in the sensitive faculties of man. Whether the heart is the sensitive part of man in which sensitive love is elicited, is a physiological question, undecided by scientists. This much is certain, however: the human heart is so intimately connected with human love that it records that emotion faithfully and constantly. This fact is so certain that the heart is universally taken as the symbol of love. Profane literature and sacred writings constantly set up the physical heart as the symbol of love.

Purpose of the Devotion

All the various devotions practiced in the Church have as their final and general purpose to give proper honor to God. The devotion to Christ, the God-Man, the devotion to the Sacred Wounds, the devotion to God's Mother, the devotion to the angels and the saints, all have as their final purpose to give proper honor to God.

But each particular devotion has its own particular

purpose. To determine what is the particular purpose of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, as we have it in the Church today, we must look at it as it is actually practiced in the Church, and as approved of and explained by the Church. Using this norm as our guide, we see that the particular purpose of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart is twofold: First, to excite in ourselves the love of God; secondly, to make reparation for the injury done to God by sin, especially for the insults offered to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament by sinners and by careless, indifferent Catholics.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What is worship? Religious worship? Latria, Dulia, Hyperdulia?
2. What is absolute worship? Relative worship?
3. What is meant by the material and formal object of worship?
4. Show from Scripture that Christ as God-Man is to be given absolute divine worship.
5. Why can the sacred humanity in itself be given absolute divine worship?
6. Why are all the portions of the sacred humanity the proper object of absolute divine worship?
7. Is the Devotion to the Sacred Heart founded on the private revelation made to St. Margaret Mary?
8. What is the material object of this Devotion? The formal object?
9. Why is the Heart of Christ selected as the proper symbol of the love of Christ for us?
10. What is the special purpose of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart?

CHAPTER VIII

THE GLORIES OF MARY

Introduction to Mariology

That portion of Catholic Theology which has to do with the pre-eminence of Mary is called Mariology—the science about Mary. A Catholic need make no apology for making his study of the glories of Mary a part of his study of the Infinite Perfection of God. The science about Mary is justly made a part of the science about God, because to study Mary is to see God revealing Himself supernaturally.

In the created works of nature, God stands revealed naturally. The mind of man looks upon the world with the light of reason and sees behind that world, the Creator;—the beauty of the flowers and trees and birds and men reveals to his reason the infinite beauty of God; the power of the ocean, and of the storm, and of the other forces of nature reveals to man the Omnipotence of God; the ceaseless order in the world, which swings the planets with clocklike precision around their orbits, which brings seeming death to the plants and trees in the autumn and fresh life to them in the spring, which repeats with unfailing constancy the birth, life and death of all the complicated and mystifying forms of animal life, which keeps the earth peopled with men, the masterpieces of the material world, kings of material creation, tells man of the Infinite Mind in the background of Eternity, ordering the things of time.

But God has created a world of supernatural life and activity, and has placed it not afar off, away from man and the material world, but in the very center of our lives.

Nature could not tell reason of the existence of this new order of creation. It was in a plane above nature. Reason could not become aware of the new creation, for reason is fastened down to the natural world.

But man must know of the marvelous creation of grace and glory made for his benefit. Since natural creation could not reveal it to man, the Creator Himself must reveal it. To the mind of man must be given the light of faith without which he would not receive God's word. Through the long line of messengers in the Old Law, He told the Story of the New Creation; bit by bit the story grew. But there was always so much left untold that mankind began to long for the coming of the Great Revealer, the Messias, the Infinite God, who would at last gather humanity around Himself on the hillsides of Judea and tell the story in all its fullness. God from heaven would point to His Son, made Man, and tell us not only to hear Him speak the eternal truth, but also to see in the dazzling light of His perfections, human and divine, the supernatural working of God.

The greatest work of God in the new order is the God-Man, Jesus Christ. But next to Him in order stands His Mother Mary. God worked with loving care over the human soul and body of His Son—the perfection of the God-Man would be undeniable evidence that God was working supernaturally and in wondrous ways among men and for men; God worked, too, with loving care over the soul of Christ's Mother, that she might be an unending reminder to men of the power of God's supernatural working in the new creation.

To know Mary better and better is to know God more and more perfectly. The science about Mary is a part of our science about God.

Mother of God

In studying the divine favors given to Mary by God, the proper starting point is her Divine Maternity, or the divine favor which made her the Mother of God. This

is the proper starting point for us in learning God's favors to Mary, because it was the starting point for God in His bestowal of these favors upon her. She received the gift of the Immaculate Conception, the gift of absolute freedom from all personal sin, the gift of virginity, freedom from concupiscence, fullness of grace, sanctifying and actual, the gift of the assumption, precisely because she was in a real sense God's Mother.

Explanation of Divine Maternity

Now, in what way was Mary God's Mother? She was God's Mother because she was the Mother of the Divine Person, Jesus Christ. Through the operation of the Holy Ghost, there was formed in her womb the body of Christ; God put into that body a human soul, and at the very moment in which the soul and body of Christ were united and became a complete human nature, that human nature was united to the Second Person of the Trinity and became the human nature of God. That which was conceived in Mary was a Divine Person, that which was born of her was a Divine Person. She was the mother of that Person. Because that Person was God, Mary was the Mother of God. The mother of a mere man is really the mother of that human person, although she in no way causes the existence of the soul. She merely prepares in her womb the body to which God, according to His established law, gives a soul. So Mary is really the Mother of the Divine Person, because in her womb she prepared a body, to the body God gave a soul, and to soul and body united to form man, God gave the inestimable favor of being hypostatically united with the Divine Person.

Heresies

Hence, looking back over past centuries, we find that all those who denied that Mary was God's Mother did so because they denied that Christ was one Divine Person, with two natures, human and divine, the divine coming by eternal generation from the Father, the human by generation in time from Mary.

For instance, before the close of the first century, a

body of men, the Docetae, denied a real body of Christ;—it merely seemed to be a body, they said. Indirectly then, they denied Mary's Divine Maternity. If Christ had no real human body, then Mary was not God's Mother, because Mary's part in the Divine Maternity was to prepare a human body for the Son of God.

In the fourth century, the Arians denied a divine nature to Christ. He was, they said, the greatest of God's creatures, but not God. Indirectly, then, the Arians denied that Mary was the Mother of God, because, if Christ had not divine nature, He was not God, and Mary was the mother of a mere man.

In the same fourth century came the Eutychians, who held that there was one nature in Christ; they did not agree as to whether this one nature was purely divine or a sort of divine-human nature resulting from a blending of human nature and divine;—but on this they did agree, that in Christ there was not a real human nature. Indirectly, then, they denied that Mary was God's Mother, because her only title to that motherhood rests on this, that Christ had a real human nature from Mary.

In the fifth century, Nestorius, a Syrian, Patriarch of Constantinople, directly assailed the dogma that Mary was Mother of God. This he did because he held that in Christ there were not only two natures, human and divine, but two persons as well, a Divine Person and a human person. Mary was the mother of the human person, and in no real sense the mother of the Divine Person.

In modern times, amongst Protestants, there is a vast number who deny that Christ was divine—and consequently, deny that Mary was the Mother of God. Even among those who hold that Christ was God, in the same sense in which Catholics hold it, and who hold that Mary really conceived and gave birth to the God-Man, there is a strange reluctance to calling her the Mother of God.

Article of faith

That Mary was the Mother of God is a clearly defined article of faith. Several Councils have expressly defined it. The Council of Ephesus (431) says:

"If anyone does not profess that Emmanuel is truly God, and that, consequently, the Holy Virgin is the Mother of God, inasmuch as she gave birth in the flesh to the Word of God made flesh, let him be anathema" (Can. 1).

Holy Scripture

In proving from Scripture that Mary was the Mother of God, it is necessary merely to show that Christ owes His human nature to Mary by way of real, human generation.

Now, what does Holy Scripture say of the relation between Jesus Christ and Mary? It says that she conceived Him and gave birth to Him.

"Now the generation of Christ was in this wise. When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost.

"Whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately.

"But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: 'Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

" 'And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins.'

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet saying:

" 'Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.'

"And Joseph rising up from sleep did as the angel of

the Lord had commanded him, and took unto him his wife.

"And he knew her not till she brought forth her first-born son, and he called his name Jesus" (Matt. I, 18-end).

"And the angel said to her, 'Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God.

" 'Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus.

" 'He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever' " (Luke I, 30-33).

Fathers

The Divine Maternity was so clearly defined in the Council of Ephesus, that we would naturally expect all the Fathers who wrote after that time to proclaim the dogma in clear terms. That is actually what took place. There is no need, then, to cite from these Fathers. But also in the Fathers, who wrote before Ephesus, do we find firm testimony given to the doctrine that Mary was really the Mother of God.

St. Ignatius of Antioch: "Our God Jesus Christ was borne in her womb by Mary, according to the disposition of God, from the seed of David by the Holy Ghost; He was born and baptized. . . ." (Epist. ad Ephes. 18, 2).

St. Ephrem: "In the womb of Mary He, who was from eternity equal to the Father, was made an infant. He communicated to us His greatness, and took on our infirmity. . . . This virgin was made a mother, without loss of virginity, with no breaking of the seals of her virginity, and she carried the Child in her womb with intact virginity; and she became the Mother of God, and His handmaid and the work of His wisdom" (Hymni de B. Maria, 18, 12, 20).

St. Gregory Nazianzen: "Let him who will not accept

Mary as the Mother of God be excluded from God" (Epist. 101 ad Cled.).

It is interesting to add here as a sign of the faith of the Church before the Council of Ephesus, the statement of Julian the Apostate, preserved in the writings of Cyril of Alexandria (Contra Julian. 1.8): "You [Christians] never cease calling Mary the Mother of God."

Mary our Mother

In the Catholic devotion to Mary, both in its public liturgical form, v.g., in the Masses and Offices said on the feasts of Mary, and in its private form, Mary is called our Mother. In what sense is she our Mother? She is not our Mother in the literal sense. That is evident; she did not give physical birth to us. She is our Mother only in a metaphorical sense. She assists us in our spiritual life of grace in somewhat the same way, in which our earthly, natural mother assists us in our natural life. If we look at the supernatural life of grace which God gives us, we see that Mary has so much to do with that life of ours, that it is only natural to liken her work for us to the work of a mother. Mary "mothers" our life of grace; she gave us Christ from whom all life of grace comes; she nurtures that life within us by her continual intercession for us; as the Mediatrix of all our graces, she continually acts with God in keeping that life within us, and in warding off the death of mortal sin.

The perfect Virginity of Mary

It is a defined doctrine of the Church that Mary was always a virgin. She was a virgin before she became the Mother of God, she was a virgin when she conceived, she was a virgin in giving birth to Christ, she remained a virgin until her death.

Perfect virginity means not only bodily integrity, but also the exclusion of all moral guilt arising from offense against the virtue of purity. The perfect virginity of Mary included even more; what it meant for her was this:

1. Never in the least way was there any sin or fault against the virtue of purity.

2. There was never in her the least disorder, or disturbance of passion, arising from sensual concupiscence.

3. Her most pure body remained intact throughout her entire life, not only when conceiving Christ, but also when Christ passed from her womb into the world.

4. She preserved this bodily integrity during her entire life.

All these privileges went to constitute the perfect virginity of Mary. But for the present we shall consider merely the bodily integrity of the Mother of God. Her freedom from concupiscence, and her freedom from any fault or sin against purity are treated under the heading of her sinlessness.

Virginity of Mary an article of faith

More than once has the Church defined the virginity of Mary. In the year 649, the First Council of Lateran defined it thus:

"If anyone refuse to confess in accordance with the Holy Fathers that Mary was, properly speaking, and of a truth, the holy Mother of God and always an Immaculate Virgin . . . that she conceived of the Holy Ghost without seed, and gave birth without corruption, her virginity remaining inviolate also after parturition, let him be anathema" (Can. 3).

Holy Scripture

Scripture tells us that when the angel Gabriel came to announce the Incarnation, Mary was a virgin: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary" (Luke I, 26-27).

Scripture also tells us that, in giving birth to Jesus, Mary did not lose her virginity:

"And the angel said to her: 'Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God.

" 'Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.

" 'He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the

Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever.

" 'And of his kingdom there shall be no end.'

"And Mary said to the angel, 'How shall this be done, because I know not man?'

"And the angel answering said to her: 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God' " (*Ibid.* vv. 30-36).

Here the angel assures Mary that she will conceive without the co-operation of man; as a virgin will she conceive her Son.

Though Scripture does not clearly state that Mary retained her physical integrity after the birth of Christ, it does, however, state something from which we rightly conclude that her physical virginity remained perpetually intact.

At the time of the Annunciation, Mary makes it clear that she has made a promise of virginity: "How can this come about? For I know not man." "I know not man" must here mean, that there was an impossibility of her knowing man. If Mary had not made a promise of virginity, she would not have told the angel that she did not see how she could give birth to a son. Had she made no promise of virginity, there would have been no obstacle in the way; a son could have been born to her in marriage in the ordinary way. But Mary says there was an obstacle in the way. The angel does not say, "It is God's will that you marry and bear your son in the ordinary way." No, he says "God will bring you to conceive and give birth to your son without need of knowing man. Therefore, you can cast aside all fear." She could be the Mother of Jesus, and yet remain true to her promise of virginity.

The perpetual virginity of Mary is clearly taught by the Fathers. **Fathers**

St. Ambrose declares: "But Mary did not fail, the mistress of virginity did not fail; nor was it possible that she, who had borne God, should be regarded as bearing man. And Joseph, the just man, assuredly did not so completely lose his mind as to seek carnal intercourse with the Mother of God" (De Inst. Virg. 6, 44).

St. Augustine: "She conceived as a virgin, she gave birth as a virgin, she remained a virgin after child-birth" (Serm. de Temp. 51, c. 11).

The dignity of Mary's Divine Maternity was the reason why God exempted her from the taint of original sin; it is also the reason why He kept her free from all personal sin, and bestowed on her at the moment of her conception a plenitude of grace. **Fullness of grace in Mary**

When we recall that God chose Mary to be His Mother, and as a fitting accompaniment decreed that she should be free from original sin, and that she should always be a virgin, we are easily brought to see the mind of God in reference to His Mother. It is one of lavish granting of supernatural gifts to her. We cannot doubt, then, that when it came to the question of bestowal of grace, and freedom from personal sin, God's decree was, that from the very beginning of her life, the Mother of God should receive an abundance of grace, and the gift of freedom from the least taint of sin.

That Mary was privileged with the gift of a plenitude of grace is taught in the Church as a revealed doctrine; it has not been defined, but is undoubtedly in the ordinary teaching of the Church throughout the world.

Scripture tells us of this fullness of grace when it narrates the meeting between the angel Gabriel and Mary at the time of the Annunciation. Gabriel tells her that a fullness of grace is hers. "Hail, full of grace" (Luke I, 28). **Holy Scripture**

Fathers

The Fathers teach that Mary had this plenitude of grace.

St. Epiphanius: ". . . full of grace in every respect" (Haer. 58, n. 24).

St. Augustine: "An abundance of grace was conferred on her, who merited to conceive and bear Him, of whom we know that He was without sin" (De Nat. et Grat. c. 36).

Her sinlessness

Hand in hand with this fullness of grace in Mary went her freedom from all personal sin. This sinlessness is taught by the Church as of faith. The Council of Trent defined:

"If anyone assert that man, after he is once justified . . . is able to avoid throughout his lifetime all, even venial sin, except by a special privilege of God, as the Church holds in regard to the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema" (Sess. 6, can. 23).

Holy Scripture

Scripture makes no explicit reference to the sinlessness of Mary, at least not to the extent of explicitly excluding venial fault from her life. When it calls her "full of grace," serious sin, which cannot exist in a soul full of grace, it clearly excludes. But when, in Holy Scripture, Mary is portrayed as God's Mother, as full of grace, as free from original sin, it surely implies that the fullness of grace given to Mary resulted in the absolute exclusion of that evil, to which grace is opposed—sin. Grace in Mary would not be there in a fullness befitting the Mother of God unless it excluded all sin.

Fathers

Mary's sinlessness is sustained in the teaching of the Fathers.

St. Augustine says: "We must except the Holy Virgin Mary, concerning whom I wish to raise no question, when it touches the subject of sin, out of honor to the Lord" (De Nat. et Grat. c. 36, n. 42).

Assumption

On the fifteenth day of August, the Church celebrates the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

What is meant by the Assumption? The meaning is that the Blessed Mother was taken to heaven, body and soul. God did not subject His Mother to the general law that the bodies of the just should not enter heaven until after the Last Judgment.

Did Mary die?

The fact of Mary's death does not seem to be a necessary part of the truth of the Assumption. Even though she had never died, the Assumption could still have taken place. Had Mary never died, the Assumption would mean that the Blessed Mother, while still living, was taken to heaven, body and soul. Nevertheless, the fact of her death seems certain. Scripture says nothing about her death, nor does history, either profane or ecclesiastical, testify to the death of Mary. But if we follow, as we should, the universal belief among Christians from primitive times to our own, we must conclude that just as Christ, her Son, was Himself subjected to death, so was Mary, His Mother.

Her death not penalty of sin

The death of each one of us, who have been born in original sin, is the penalty of original sin. In Mary, there was no original sin. She was exempt from original sin and from all its penalties. Among the penalties of original sin was death. Pope Pius V, in 1567, condemned the following proposition of Baius:

"No one except Christ is without original sin; consequently the Blessed Virgin died because of sin contracted through Adam."

By condemning this proposition, Pope Pius asserted that Mary's death was not the penalty of original sin.

If God, then, allowed His Mother to die, it was not because the penalty of death was due to her, but for some other reason. What that reason was, God has not told us. It would, however, be in no way rash or presumptuous on our part to suggest that God wanted the Mother of His Son to be like us in all things, sin alone excepted. Her Son was to be like us even to suffering and death; it was

proper that she, too, should bear the same likeness. She was subjected to the deepest suffering, though her freedom from original sin freed her from the debt or penalty of suffering. Christ was like us in suffering; His Mother bore the same likeness. So, just as Mary was like her Son in suffering, she was like her Son in dying.

Proof of the Assumption

There is no statement of the Assumption in Holy Scripture. Moreover, if we consult the historical writings of the first five centuries, we find them void of any historical data to certify the fact of the Assumption.

How, then, can theologians speak of the doctrine, not only as a certain conclusion from Revelation, but say, as they do, that it is a Revealed Doctrine, which needs merely the explicit definition of the Church to give authoritative and solemn assurance to an already believing Church that Our Lady's Assumption is as much an article of faith as the doctrine of her Divine Motherhood?

The answer is that Christ did not found an infallible Church which could teach as certain, merely those truths which were written down clearly in Holy Scripture or historical documents. Christ's Church was made a living teacher; she was free to put down in writing her teaching, either in whole or in part, or, if she chose, she was free to perpetuate her teaching by mere oral tradition, and allow it to pass on through the centuries by word of mouth. She actually chose both methods; she put the great bulk of the Revelation, which she received from Christ, into the books which she herself wrote, the books of the New Testament; the rest she carried on by her oral teaching. Most of this oral teaching has, as a matter of fact, been clearly put into writing by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. But the Church is not limited to the power of teaching infallibly only those truths clearly set down in Scripture and written tradition. She has from Christ the power of teaching Revelation clearly and fully. When a doctrine of Revelation has been set

down in Scripture or written tradition only vaguely or implicitly, she, as infallible explainer of God's Revelation, can at any time and in any century declare what is the full and clear meaning of these vague and implicit statements. This she did in regard to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In the Middle Ages, quite a few theologians doubted whether the Immaculate Conception was a part of Revelation; others felt sure it was a part of Revelation. All of them agreed that her sinlessness, her virginity, her fullness of grace, were revealed doctrines; all agreed that she was chosen by God "to crush the head of the serpent." In the nineteenth century, the Church unhesitatingly declared in Solemn Definition that the Immaculate Conception was part of the Revelation she had received from Christ through the Apostles; that it was necessarily a part of those prerogatives of Mary, in which the Church had believed from the beginning.

The same must be said about the doctrine of the Assumption. True, the Church has not explicitly defined it, but her theologians, whose unanimous teaching always speaks her mind, declare that with the Revealed Doctrine of Mary's Divine Maternity, Virginity, Sinlessness and Fullness of Grace, is necessarily connected the doctrine of the Assumption.

Tradition on the Assumption

The doctrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother into heaven has its most reliable foundation in Tradition. This tradition is of such long standing and so universal, that it has all the marks of that infallible tradition which carries on unerringly Christ's original revelations. The outstanding element in this tradition is the fourteen-century-old practice in the Church of celebrating the feast of the Assumption. The second and next important element in this tradition is the doctrinal statement found with ever-increasing frequency in ecclesiastical writings, from the end of the sixth century to our own time.

Celebration of feast

The outstanding element, we said, of the tradition concerning the Assumption was the practice of celebrating the feast of the Assumption. From the sixth century on, both in the Western and Eastern Churches, this feast was celebrated. The liturgical books, in which the form of celebration is presented, are evidence of this fact. The Sacramentary of Pope Gregory I (540-604); the Gothic-Gallican Missal (in use in Gaul until the eighth century); the Mozarabic Missal (which originated in the sixth century);—all these witnesses to the liturgical practice of the Church attest the fact of the celebration of the Feast of the Assumption. In the East, according to the testimony of Nicephorus Callistus (Hist. Eccl. XVII, 28), the Emperor Mauritius (582-602) commanded the celebration of the feast in all those places of the Byzantine Empire where it was not yet observed. The schismatic Greek Church showed by its confession at a council held in Jerusalem in the year 1672 A.D., that it had clung to the custom of celebrating the feast of the Assumption. The words of the confession were: "Though the immaculate body of Mary was locked in the tomb, yet, like Christ, she was assumed and migrated to heaven on the third day." This practice, so evident in the sixth century, has today become, not only universal, but so prominent that the feast of the Assumption has become one of the greater feasts in the Calendar of the Church.

The Church, which must not only teach truth, but also guard against the introduction of false teaching, was aware of this practice of celebrating the feast of the Assumption. If the doctrine of the Assumption, on which the practice was founded, was false, the infallible Church must have denounced the doctrine and abolished the feast. Instead of this, the Church not only permitted the celebration of the feast, but placed it in her official liturgy, and made it a feast for the Universal Church.

Fathers

Side by side with the practice of the Church, we have the Fathers giving quite ample testimony to the truth of Mary's Assumption.

St. Gregory of Tours, in the sixth century, says: "The Lord commanded the holy body to be borne on a cloud to Paradise, where, now reunited to its soul, and exulting with the elect, it enjoys the never-ending bliss of eternity" (Mirac. 1, 4).

St. John Damascene, in the eighth century: "Thy body, immaculate and free from all stain, was not left in the earth, but thou, Queen, Mistress, Lady, Mother of God, wast carried away to the royal home of heaven" (Hom. in Dorm. B.V., hom. 1, n. 12).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. How is Mary the Mother of God?
2. How could she be the mother of a Person who is eternal?
3. What is meant by the virginity of Mary?
4. Prove the perpetual virginity of Mary.
5. Show from Scripture that Mary was full of grace.
6. What was the sinlessness of Mary?
7. What is meant by the Assumption of Mary?
8. Is the truth of the Assumption clearly found in Scripture or in the early writings of the Church?
9. If not, how can we hold it as part of Divine Revelation?
10. Prove the Assumption from the tradition in the Church since the sixth century.

CHAPTER IX

DEVOTION TO MARY AND THE SAINTS

Catholics practice devotion to saints

Our Catholic prayer books include many prayers to the Mother of God and to the other saints. Some of those prayers are petitions, asking the saints to beg God to bless us in one way or another; others are prayers of praise, in which we declare our respectful and humble admiration for the great holiness which was in their earthly lives. Even the two most sacred prayer books used in the Church, the Missal and the Breviary, are constantly asking favors of God through the intercession of the saints, and are constantly paying tribute to the holiness of their lives.

Misunderstood by non-Catholics

To us Catholics these prayers seem so natural and reasonable that it is a mystery to us that so many non-Catholics not only do not understand, but are positively shocked at our use of such prayers. Undoubtedly, this adverse attitude of non-Catholics is, in great part, due to the fact that they do not understand how we pray to the saints and why we pray to them. In other words, they do not understand the theology of devotion to the saints. It can be said, too, without fear of rash judgment, that Catholics at times have not known sufficiently well the proper explanation of our devotion to the saints. Their own knowledge of the matter is so vague that it satisfies neither themselves nor sincere non-Catholics who ask for an explanation.

A clear understanding of the matter will not only make our devotion to the saints give greater honor to God and bring more blessings to ourselves, but will enable us to do

our part in removing misunderstanding from the minds of those who are not Catholics.

Non-Catholic objections to devotion to saints

Before we examine the teaching of the Church on the matter, it will be useful to put before our minds some of the faults that non-Catholics find with prayers to the saints.

1. "You ought not ask spiritual favors of a creature; you should ask them of God alone. He, alone, can give spiritual favors."
2. "In your prayers you should praise only God; it is wrong to offer a prayer of praise to a creature, no matter how holy his life was."
3. "It seems like idolatry to kneel down and offer up a prayer to a mere creature."
4. "The proper worship of God is interfered with. All religious devotion should be directed to God."

We shall imagine ourselves listening to a well-instructed Catholic meeting these objections. He will have no difficulty in taking them up, one after the other, and showing that they are founded on misunderstanding.

The first objection was: "You ought not ask spiritual favors of a creature. You should ask them of God alone. He, alone, can give spiritual favors." He will answer: "But we Catholics do not ask the saints to grant us spiritual favors. We know that they are God's friends, and that God will be only too ready to listen to them when they ask God to bless us with spiritual favors. All that we do is to ask the saints to pray to God for us."

Second objection: "In your prayers you should praise only God; it is wrong to offer a prayer of praise to a creature, no matter how holy his life was." He will say: "It is quite proper to express the admiration I have for the intellectual ability of one of my fellow-men; it is perfectly proper for an orator, speaking for a whole nation, to tell a victorious general of the thankful admira-

tion the whole country feels for his ability as a leader. Why is it wrong to praise a saint for having attained holiness, a more difficult and glorious thing than brain success or war success?"

But here the non-Catholic interrupts: "But the holiness of the saint is due to God; without God's help he could never have been a saint." "That is perfectly true," answers the Catholic, "but you are forgetting that our victorious general could never have been successful if God had not given him his life and his abilities, and had not always been beside him keeping that life in him. If you will not let me praise my saint, I will not let you praise your general. Another thing you forget is this: it is true that without God's help the saint could never have been a saint. But it is also true that God's help would have been useless if the saint had not constantly, in spite of great difficulties, stirred himself to make use of God's help and to be up and doing. Your general would never have won the war had he stayed home and passed his time reading the 'Life of Napoleon,' leaving the winning of the war to 'God's help.' God's help helps only those who use it."

Third objection: "It seems like idolatry to kneel down and offer up a prayer to a mere creature."

The answer: "Let us first take your objection against kneeling down to a mere creature. Have you never seen a grief-stricken mother kneel down before a judge, and plead for a wayward son who has been found guilty of crime and is about to be sentenced? Kneeling down before another is not idolatry, it is sometimes the attitude of earnest pleading, it is sometimes the attitude of respect —men have never looked on it as idolatry to bend the knee to their king. Now, we Catholics should be idolaters, if we knelt before the saints and prayed to them as though they were God, or as though we thought they were as

good and powerful as God. But we never pray to the saints, not even to God's Mother, in that way."

Fourth objection: "The proper worship of God is interfered with. All religious devotions should be directed to God."

The answer: "I will take the second part of your statement first—'All religious devotions should be directed to God.' That is perfectly true. When I praise a saint I must realize that his holiness comes from God; Catholics always praise their saints in that way. But you say, 'the proper worship of God is interfered with.' I will answer this by asking you two questions: When I praise the beauty of the world which God created, am I taking away from the praise I should give to God? When I praise the beauty and gentleness and nobility of children, am I taking away from the praise I should give the mother who trained those children to be what they are? No, my friend; the saints are God's best children and God loves to hear us, His other children who are not so good, offer up our prayers of praise to His saints."

Two kinds of prayers to saints

In giving the Catholic teaching on devotion to the saints, we shall divide the subject into two parts:

1st. Praying for the intercession of the saints.
2nd. Honoring the saints in prayer.

It is licit and helpful to ask intercession of saints

When we invoke the saints, we ask them to pray to God for us. We approach them because they are special friends of God who have served God in an especially heroic manner. We do not approach them as though they themselves could send down blessings from heaven upon our lives. We merely ask them to speak for us to God. There can be nothing wrong in such action, in itself; unless we know, then, that it is positively forbidden by God, it is perfectly lawful. Has God forbidden it? He has done quite the opposite—He has assured us that He approves of it. This approbation has been made manifest to us

through Holy Scripture, through the teaching of the Fathers, and through the definite teaching of the Church from the earliest ages. Though the Church has never defined explicitly that the invocation of the saints is lawful and useful, she teaches it in her daily teaching as of faith.

But is it useful for us to ask the saints to intercede for us? There is no need for any doubt on that score. If God approves of our asking their intercession, it is a sign that He will listen to their prayers.

Holy Scripture

Several passages of Holy Scripture describe men as successfully asking the intercession of angels and saints. This is quite sufficient to show the lawfulness and usefulness of the practice.

The archangel Raphael said to Tobias: "When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord.

"And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee.

"And now the Lord hath sent me to heal thee, and to deliver Sara, thy son's wife, from the devil.

"For I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the Lord" (Tob. XII, 12-16).

In the Second Book of Machabees we read of a vision in which Judas saw Onias and Jeremias (both of whom were long since dead) "pray for all the people" (XV, 12-17).

The two passages cited above give a direct argument for the lawfulness and usefulness of the invocation of the saints.

We can also draw from Scripture an indirect argument, which is this: According to Holy Scripture, God frequently heeded the intercession of just men, praying for their fellowmen; Abraham's prayer for Sodom was heard (Gen. XVIII, 23; XIX, 22). The prayer of Moses for the Israelites was heard (Exod. XXXII, 11). If God

hears the prayers of just men while they still live on earth, much more will He hear their prayers when they have reached the place of eternal reward.

Fathers

St. Ambrose says: "The angels must be honored . . . the martyrs must be employed. . . . Let us not be ashamed to employ them as intercessors in our infirmity" (De Vid. c. 9, n. 55).

St. John Chrysostom: "Not only on this, their festival day, but on other days as well, let us cleave to and invoke them, and pray that they be our protectors, for they enjoy great confidence during this life and after death; yea, much more after death, for they bear the signs of Christ's wounds, and when they exhibit these they can persuade their King to do anything" (Hom. de SS. Beren. et Pros. n. 7).

It is lawful to honor the saints

Now we take up the second of the questions in reference to devotion to the saints: Is it lawful to make our prayer to a saint a prayer of humble praise, a prayer made for the purpose of honoring the saint. In itself such action is not wrong. If it is wrong, then it is always wrong for us to make a speech of praise in honor of a president, or a king, or a general, or anyone else who has acquitted himself well in the duties of his office.

Since, then, the act of offering a prayer of respectful and humble praise and honor to a saint because of his holiness is not wrong in itself, it is perfectly lawful to do so if God has not forbidden it. God has not forbidden us to honor the saints in our prayers. There is not a vestige of a divine prohibition to be found, either in Holy Scripture or in Tradition. But there is a vestige, and more than a vestige, of the positive approbation of God, both in Scripture and Tradition.

Article of faith

The Second Council of Nicaea (787 A.D.) defined the lawfulness of honoring the saints (Actio 7). The Council of Trent repeated and reconfirmed this definition. We quote the words of the Council of Trent: "The honor

which is given them [the sacred images] is referred to the originals which they represent; in such wise that, by the images which we kiss and before which we uncover our heads, or kneel, we adore Christ and *venerate His saints,* whose likeness they bear'' (Sess. XXV).

Holy Scripture

That God does approve of our honoring His saints is shown by Holy Scripture. In several passages it speaks of acts of honor shown to the angels, and speaks of these acts with approbation. In other passages it speaks with approval of religious veneration shown to saintly persons on earth. The only fair conclusion is that, if God approves of the honoring of the angels, and of saintly persons on earth, He certainly approves of our honoring the saints in heaven.

1. Scripture shows its approval of honor paid to the angels:

''And the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of the city and, seeing them, he rose up and went to meet them and worshiped prostrate to the ground'' (Gen. XIX, 1).

The angels receive the veneration with no sign of disapproval. Did God disapprove of such veneration, His angels would have warned Lot of God's displeasure.

''And when Josue was in the field of the city of Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and saw a man standing over against him, holding a drawn sword, and he went to him and said, 'Art thou one of ours, or of our adversaries?'

''And he answered: 'No, but I am prince of the host of the Lord and now I am come.'

''Josue fell on his face to the ground and, worshiping, said: 'What saith my Lord to his servant?' '' (Jos. V, 13-16).

Here, again, without the least show of disapproval on the part of the angel, veneration to an angel is shown.

2. Scripture speaks with approval of religious veneration shown to saintly men living on earth.

"And as Abdias was in his way, Elias met him and he knew him and fell on his face and said, 'Art thou my Lord, Elias?' "

Abdias shows veneration towards Elias because of his holy character; Elias accepts the honor shown. As the prophet of God he should have admonished Abdias if the veneration shown were displeasing to God. A similar instance is related in the fourth Book of Kings:

"And the sons of the prophets at Jericho, who were over against him [Eliseus], seeing it, said: 'The spirit of Elias hath rested upon Eliseus,' and coming to meet him, they worshiped him, falling to the ground" (II, 15).

Here again reverence is shown another man because of his holy character.

Fathers

St. Cyprian says: "We celebrate the sufferings of the martyrs and their days by annual commemorations" (Epist. 34, 3).

St. Augustine not only defends the practice of venerating the martyrs, but, incidentally, shows how the veneration of the saints in no way detracts from the adoration due to God:

"The Christian populace celebrates the memory of the martyrs with religious solemnity . . . but we rear altars, not to any martyrs, but to the God of Martyrs, Himself, though in memory of the martyrs. For what priest, standing before the altar where their sacred bodies lie, has ever said, 'We offer [sacrifice] to thee, O Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian'? What is offered is offered to God, who has crowned the martyrs, near the memorial places of those whom He has crowned, that a stronger affection may arise from the places themselves to intensify our love, both for those whom we can imitate and for Him by whose help we are able to imitate them. We venerate the

martyrs, therefore, with that worship of love and association by which the saints of God are venerated in this life . . . all the more devoutly because they have securely won their battles'' (Contra Faustum 20, 21).

Devotion to the Blessed Mother

The Blessed Mother of God is the greatest of the saints of God. If honor is due to the lesser saints, honor is certainly due to the greatest of the saints; if it is lawful and useful to invoke the intercession of the saints who are the friends of God, it is lawful and useful to invoke the intercession of her who is the Mother of God.

And if the honor due to a saint is measured by the holiness of his earthly life, and if the power of a saint's intercession is measured by that same holiness, what honor is not due to Mary, what power must there not be in the intercession of Mary!

She stands high above all creatures; she stands between God and us. As we look at her, we see her glorious holiness and all the supernatural gifts God gave her: Full of grace—Immaculate in Conception—Immaculate in Life—Most pure in Perpetual Virginity—Assumed into Heaven—Crowned with Glory. We see her holy above all other creatures and favored above all others. We feel sure that above all other creatures must she be honored by us.

Jesus Christ, too, looks upon His Mother. He sees that the loving care which the Holy Trinity took over her life from its first moment has made of her one who in all truth ''doth magnify the Lord.'' And when Mary comes to Jesus and prays for us ''now and at the hour of our death,'' Jesus, the Son, will hear the prayer of Mary, His Mother.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What objections are often urged by non-Catholics against the veneration of the saints?
2. Answer those objections.
3. What is meant by the intercession of the saints?

4. Prove that it is lawful and useful.
5. Is it lawful to offer to the saints prayers of praise?
6. Prove from Scripture that God approves of prayers of praise to the saints.
7. Is the worship of the saints absolute or relative?
8. Is it the worship of Latria or Dulia?
9. Why should we honor Mary more than any other saint?
10. Why is the intercession of Mary more powerful than that of any other saint?

CHAPTER X

VENERATION OF RELICS AND IMAGES

Everybody venerates relics

There would be something lacking in a human being if he refused to venerate relics. Not all the relics of the world are in Catholic churches, or in Catholic homes. In every large city there is at least one museum which has a wealth of relics; every non-Catholic home has its store of relics. This statement may sound startling, but it is not intended to be startling. It aims at the simple truth. But, at the risk of seeming even more startling, the statement must be continued further. Not only are these museums filled with relics but, day after day, a long line of men, women and children, Christians and pagans, come to see the relics and stop to pay their reverence. In the non-Catholic home, the members of the family pay constant veneration to the relics in that home. In Mount Vernon, Virginia, from one end of the year to the other, there is a constant veneration of the relics of Washington. There is one relic there which is venerated above all the others; at almost any time of the day, you can see a group of people standing in reverent silence and with uncovered heads before the tomb of the great founder of his country. In the non-Catholic home, there is not a member of the family who does not often look at the lock of white hair placed with loving care in the frame which holds the picture of the mother long since dead.

A sacred relic

No one will deny the propriety of this external show of veneration to national and family relics. Why is it, then, that so many non-Catholics find fault with the Catholic veneration of sacred relics? Do we not often hear it said, "It is the Catholic relics, and the Catholic

way of venerating them, to which I object." Let us explain, then, what is meant by sacred relics, which they call "Catholic" relics, and what kind of veneration we give to these relics.

A Catholic relic. What is it? It is a portion of the body of a saint, or else some object which has come into close physical contact with Christ, or His Mother, or one of the saints. The Cross of Christ carried the weight of God's body, and was reddened with God's blood. It is a Catholic relic; it ought to be the whole world's relic. The instruments of torture which gave to the martyrs their chance to prove themselves warriors in the cause of Eternal Freedom and Liberty, are relics. They are called Catholic relics, but all the world of Christians has a right to them, if it would only use its right. The bodies of the saints are relics, just as the body of Washington is a relic.

But the relics of Christ and the saints are deserving of more respect and reverence than the relics of those who were not saints. Holiness of life is worth more than pre-eminence in mere natural achievements. That is why the relics of Christ and the saints are called sacred relics; they are relics of those who were made sacred to God by holiness.

Catholic veneration of relics

Catholics rightly look on sacred relics with feelings of religious reverence; the relic itself has in it a bit of sacredness because of the connection it had with Christ or the saints. It is quite proper to treat it with signs of reverence. Now this is the real meaning of our veneration of sacred relics—we give them external signs of reverence. Just as the tomb of a national hero is often placed in the most prominent place, so that his fellow-countrymen may come to show their reverence for it, so do we place our relics in our churches that all may come to pay reverence to them. And just as an American, before the tomb of Washington, thinks of the courage which kept on fighting

for national liberty even when all hope of success seemed lost, and by this thought is inspired to better citizenship, so in the same way Catholics, in the presence of the relics of the saints, those warriors in the cause of soul liberty, think of the courage of the saints, and by this thought are inspired to a better service of God.

Objections

"But you Catholics adore the relics." If by the word "adore" is meant the giving the worship due to God alone (and the word frequently has that meaning), we answer, "No, we never adore the relics in that way." "But you pray to the relics." We do not pray to the relics; we venerate the relic, and in the presence of the relic, we pray to God or one of the saints.

One last objection: "You think that your relics have power to work miracles." The answer to this must be, "We do not think that our relics have power to work miracles." What we do think, and what we know from actual fact is this—God frequently rewards with a miracle the proper show of reverence for a relic.

Veneration of relics—relative worship

Worship of relics can never be absolute; it must always be relative worship. It will be remembered that by absolute worship is meant the worship given to a person because of a supernatural excellence which is in the person himself. Our worship of God, and our worship of the saints is absolute. By relative worship is meant the worship given to an object because it has an intimate relation to a person who possesses eminent supernatural excellence. The worship of relics is relative. The reason for the veneration of the relic is the sanctity of life—not of the relic—but of the saint whose relic it is.

May be Latria, Dulia or Hyperdulia

If the relic is a relic of our Blessed Lord, the worship of it is the relative worship of Latria. That means merely this, that the relic is worshiped because of the divine excellence of Christ whose relic it is. No relic of Our Lord, of course, could be a portion of His body; that body is alive in heaven and is the body of the living God. A relic

of Our Lord can at most be some object which came into intimate association with Our Lord, such as the Holy Cross, or the Nails.

If the relic is a relic of our Blessed Lady, the worship of that relic is the relative worship of Hyperdulia. Since Our Lady's body is in heaven, no relic of Our Lady will ever be a portion of her body.

If a relic is a relic of one of the other saints, the worship given to it is the relative worship of Dulia.

Veneration of relics is lawful and useful

Holy Scripture and Tradition and the Church assure us that veneration of sacred relics is lawful and useful.

Article of faith

The Second Council of Nicaea (787) condemned "those who dare to reject any of those things which are entrusted to the Church—the Gospel, or the sign of the Cross, or any pictorial representation, or the holy relics of a martyr" (Actio 7).

The Council of Trent declares:

". . . the holy bodies of saintly martyrs and others now living with Christ, which bodies were the living members of Christ and the temple of the Holy Ghost, and which are by Him to be raised unto eternal life and glorified—are to be venerated by the faithful, for through these [bodies] many benefits are bestowed by God on men; so that they who affirm that veneration and honor are not due to the relics of saints, or that these and other sacred monuments are uselessly honored by the faithful . . . are wholly to be condemned, as the Church has already long since condemned, and now also condemns them" (Sess. 25).

Holy Scripture

The divine approval of the veneration of relics is shown in many places in Holy Scripture. This approval is manifested by miracles wrought through the relics. Now, if God worked miracles through relics, we are sure that the veneration of relics is lawful and useful; useful, not only because at times God may work a miracle for our benefit,

but also useful in bringing more sanctity into our own lives.

In the Fourth Book of Kings, God teaches the veneration due to the bodies of the saints, by working a miracle through the body of Eliseus:

"And Eliseus died, and they buried him. And the rovers from Moab came into the land the same year.

"And some that were burying a man, saw the rovers, and cast the body into the sepulcher of Eliseus. And when it had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life and stood upon his feet" (XIII, 20, 21).

In the Acts of the Apostles, we see another instance of the divine approval of veneration of relics:

"And God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles.

"So that even there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them" (XIX, 11, 12).

Fathers

The Fathers never doubted the lawfulness and usefulness of veneration of relics.

St. Ambrose, speaking of the finding of the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius, says: "Many were delivered from demons, and a great number were cured of diseases, when they touched the garments of the saints" (Epist. 22, n. 9).

St. Jerome: "And so, are we guilty of sacrilege, when we enter the Basilicas of the Apostles? Was the Emperor Constantine the First guilty of sacrilege when he transported the holy remains of Andrew, Luke and Timothy?" (Adv. Vigilantium, n. 5).

Veneration of holy images

The worship of images is another practice sanctioned and fostered by the Catholic Church. She teaches as an article of faith the lawfulness and usefulness of this practice. In the two passages which we now quote, one from the Second Council of Nicaea, the other from the Council

of Trent, there is given not only an authoritative promulgation of the doctrine, but an explanation of its meaning:

Article of faith

The Second Council of Nicaea says: "As the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross, so also the holy and venerable images—whether of color or of stone, or of any other appropriate material—are suitably set up in the holy churches of God, on sacred vessels and garments, on walls and tablets, in houses and on roads; namely the image of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that of our immaculate Lady, the holy Mother of God, and those of the venerable angels and of all holy and pious men" (Actio VII).

The Council of Trent says: "The images of Christ, and of His Virgin Mother, and of other saints, are to be used and retained, especially in churches, and due honor and veneration is to be given them; not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, for which they are to be honored, or that anything is to be asked of them, or that any confidence is to be placed in images, as was done by the heathen of old who placed their hope in idols; but because the honor which is shown them is referred to the originals which they represent; so that by the images we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, and fall down, we adore Christ and venerate His saints, whose likeness they represent" (Sess. 25).

Doctrine of Trent

The complete explanation of the veneration of images is had in the passage from the Council of Trent:

"The images of Christ, and of His Virgin Mother, and of other saints are to be [given] due honor and veneration."

They are not to be treated as mere reminders of the person whom they represent, but they themselves are to be treated with honor and veneration. When we kneel down before a statue of Christ, we kneel down as a mark of veneration of the statue. It is thoroughly unreason-

able for non-Catholics to find fault with this mark of reverence. They themselves uncover their heads before the flag of their country, and by this act they declare that the flag is in itself an object worthy of reverence.

". . . not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, for which they are to be honored, or that anything is to be asked of them, or that any confidence is to be placed in images, as was done by the heathen of old who placed their hope in idols."

Trent here declares how Catholics should not, and do not, honor images. They do not honor them as though they believed a divine power, or even some non-divine power, to be in the images; the only power in the images is that of representing the saints. Nor do we ask anything of images as the heathens asked favors of their idols. We kneel before a statue of the Blessed Virgin, but we do not pray to the statue; we do not ask the statue to intercede for us with God. We never pray to an image; we pray in front of it, or beside it, or below it, but we never pray to it. We pray to the person whom it represents.

In the next words of the Trent decree is explained the manner in which images are honored:

". . . the honor which is shown them is referred to the originals which they represent; so that by the images we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, and fall down, we adore Christ and venerate His saints, whose likeness they represent."

We honor the image only because of the saint. Both the image and the saint are honored, but each in a different way. The image is honored because it has something sacred about it from the mere fact that it represents a saint; the saint is honored because of the holiness of life which was his.

Holy Scripture

One or two passages of Scripture will suffice to indicate the divine approval of the veneration of images. In

the Book of Numbers, God orders Moses to set up the figure of a brazen serpent as the sign of God's power. Evidently God implied that it should be treated as any symbol of God should be treated—with reverence:

"And the Lord said to him, 'Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign; whosoever being struck shall look on it, shall live.'

"Moses therefore made a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign; which when they that were bitten looked upon, they were healed" (XXI, 8, 9).

In the Book of Josue, Josue and the Israelites are described as prostrating themselves with reverence before the ark. The ark was the symbol of God's presence, and because it imaged God's presence, they venerated it.

"But Josue rent his garments, and fell flat on the ground before the ark of the Lord until the evening, both he and all ancients of Israel" (VII, 6).

Tradition

No fair-minded man can deny that from the earliest days of the Church, religious veneration of sacred images has been the practice. The excavations made in the Catacombs have unearthed the representations of Christ and His Mother and the Apostles Peter and Paul and other saints. Moreover, in the writings of the Fathers we find a clear defense of the veneration of images.

St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "Though we make images of holy men, we do not adore the images as though they were gods, but, in such a way that, looking at the image, we may be aroused to do as they [the saints] did" (In Ps. 113, 16).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Is it true to say that only Catholics venerate relics?
2. What is a sacred relic?
3. Do Catholics "adore" relics?
4. Do we hold that relics have the power of working miracles?
5. Why is the veneration of a relic relative worship?

6. Show that the veneration of relics is lawful and useful.
7. What is a holy image?
8. Explain Catholic veneration of holy images.
9. Show that veneration of holy images is lawful and useful.
10. Do Catholics pray to holy images?

CHAPTER XI

THE REDEMPTION APPLIED TO MAN

Man must co-operate

When satisfaction for sin was offered to God by our Divine Substitute, Jesus Christ, God accepted it. That acceptation meant that God agreed to look on that satisfaction as though it had been offered by sinful man himself.

But it was the will of God that, to have the benefits of the Redemption applied to the soul of man, man himself would have to co-operate; he would have to apply the satisfaction of Christ to his own soul. It is true, of course, that even in this act of applying the Redemption to himself, man would need the help of God; but it was just as true that there would be no application of the fruits of Christ's work unless man, too, did his part. God decreed that man should not be a mere, passive recipient of the favors assigned to the human race as the result of the Cross of Christ. God decreed that man should have a very definite and necessary work to do in making the Redemption successful, so far as he himself was concerned.

The law of the distribution of the benefits of the Redemption was to be this: If man did nothing, the Redemption would not be for him a successful Redemption; if he bestirred himself according to the rules which God laid down, the fruits of the Redemption would come to him, and in proportion to his activity. Christ had done His part; man must do his. Christ did His part, not only by being God, not only by becoming Man, but by the divine action of His life as God made Man; by a life of activity, every bit of which was of infinite value to satisfy

God and save us. Man must do his part; he can do it only by action, by an activity of good will and good works, and a use of the holy channels through which God has decided that the blessings of the satisfaction of Christ should flow.

The benefits of the Redemption

As the immediate result of the Redemption, God stood before man holding out to him the fruits of Christ's work. These fruits were:

1. The restoration of man to the supernatural destiny of the beatific vision, from which he had fallen by the sin of Adam.

2. Sanctifying grace, which would establish man in the right to the beatific vision and would give him the power to merit that eternal reward.

3. Actual graces, those transient helps of God by which man's activity would be kept in the proper plane, the plane of the supernatural.

These are the benefits which God would hold out to man. But, though God would freely, without any act on man's part, restore the supernatural destiny, and would freely call man to approach God and apply to himself the fruits of the Redemption, it would always remain true that man would have to will and work in order that the grace of eternal salvation might be his.

As we said, man cannot do his part in applying the Redemption to his soul without the help of God. This help is what we call Grace. The Redemption is of supreme importance to man, but of equally supreme importance to man is Divine Grace—the application of the Redemption of Christ to the soul of man.

In the remaining chapters of this volume we shall treat the question of Grace—God helping man to help himself to the absolutely necessary benefits of the Redemption.

Man is restored to supernatural destiny

In the beginning, when God created Adam, He put him in what is called the supernatural state; he and all those who were to descend from him were to live their

lives on that plane. Man had been elevated above the plane which naturally belonged to him, and had been put on a plane which was his only by an absolutely free gift of God. On that new plane He would have as the final goal of his life the beatific vision; he would have full power to attain that goal. But it was all far above that to which man was naturally entitled. Adam, by his sin, lost the right to the supernatural destiny, lost it for himself and us. Adam and the human race dropped to the plane of the natural. The Redemption of Christ restored the race to the supernatural plane. As soon as God promised a Redeemer, man was, by the anticipated virtue of the Cross of Christ, restored to the state which sin had lost for him.

Comparison of the natural and supernatural

To understand better, or even to understand at all, what the supernatural state is, we must first know what is meant by the natural state of man. Now, to what destiny was man naturally entitled? The sole way of discovering this is to examine the nature of man; his nature will tell us the destiny for which he is made. If we wish to find out what a thing is made for, we must find out what the thing is, and what it naturally can do. I know what a watch is made for by looking at it and examining its parts. I see, then, that it was made to tell time. I know what a seed is made for by watching the activities of that seed. I notice that when it is placed in the ground it produces a plant or a tree; I know, then, that it was made to produce a plant or a tree. When I examine man, I find out that he is naturally made to be happy forever in a perfect knowledge and love of God; but this happiness would not come from a knowing and loving God as seen face to face in the beatific vision. Man's natural destiny is not to see God face to face, but to see Him as He is reflected in creatures. After this life, man would be able to see God reflected in creatures so perfectly that he would be made happy in that contemplation of God.

Man's natural destiny: to be perfectly happy in knowing and loving God

How do we know that this is man's natural destiny? As we said before, we can know it only from an examination of man's nature. We see that he possesses as his highest and controlling faculties an intellect and a will which show that they were made for God as their object. The intellect of man is made to know all being; it will not rest in the knowledge of this or that mere finite creature, but strives on ceaselessly to find all knowledge. The only object which measures fully the capacity of the intellect to know all things, is that being which is so vast that it contains, not only all the perfections that creatures could have, but all the perfections that are possible in themselves. God alone is such a Being. And God alone is the full and complete object for which man's intellect is destined. The will of man is made to desire good. It is partially satisfied when it possesses this or that mere, finite, created good; but the longing of the will for the possession of good is so vast that it will not be fully satisfied until it is in possession of that good which contains all good. The only being which contains all good is God.

But not in beatific vision

But does not this seem to show that man is naturally made for the beatific vision? If he has as his destiny to see God with his intellect, and to love Him with his will, and in such a way as to be made happy in that knowledge and love, is he not, then, made to see God face to face? No; man is not made to see God face to face. He is made to see God and to love Him with his faculties acting in their natural way. In this life the natural way for the intellect to know God and for the will to love God is to know Him and to love Him as He is reflected in creatures. There is nothing in man to indicate that after death man's mind and will should naturally see God face to face; whatever doubt we might have of this is settled definitely from Revelation, which tells us that the seeing of God face to face is not naturally due to man.

Man's natural destiny would be reached by natural acts

In the natural plane, then, the destiny of man would be to enjoy happiness forever in knowing God and loving Him with a knowledge and love founded on the contemplation of God as reflected in creatures. He would reach this destiny by leading a morally good life. What a morally good life was, his own reason would tell him. Through his reason he would see that there was a use of his faculties and of the creatures round about him which was the proper and orderly use, and a use which was the improper and disorderly use; his reason would tell him that the God of Infinite Order could not but decree absolutely that man follow the way of order and avoid the way of disorder; that this will of God, as coming to him through reason, was nothing else but Divine Law, the natural law, which must be observed; that the observance of the law would merit for man eternal friendship with God, the violation of the law would merit eternal enmity with God and eternal unhappiness. The acts of observance of the law would be morally good acts but only naturally good acts, since they proceeded from merely natural power, and were placed in observance of a merely natural Divine Law.

Divine help against sin in the natural state of man

There is something else that we know about the natural plane of man; we know it only from Revelation. In that natural plane, man's passions would not be under the control of his will as thoroughly as they were in Adam; they would be more or less at variance with the will, as they are found in us today as the result of the sin of Adam. Revelation tells us that in the merely natural state of man there would inevitably arise from the passions a pull towards sin which would sooner or later lead a man, if he lived long enough, to succumb to serious offense against the natural law of God. This pull to sin would be a natural accompaniment of man's nature; and since it would be natural, God would in justice be bound to give man those helps which he would need to be able

to withstand the pull of sin coming from the passions. This help of God would not take away the free will of man; it would merely help him to keep from sin. It would not be a grace of God because it would not be freely given. From the mere fact that God created man that way, God would be, in justice, obliged to give man that help.

The supernatural state

The natural state of man is the state in which the goal of life would be merely the natural end of man; the supernatural state of man is that state in which the goal of his life is a supernatural destiny, the beatific vision. To give to man such a goal in life is to give him something to which, as man, he is in no way entitled; it is a purely free gift of God. As a matter of fact, it is a gift to man of a destiny which could not naturally be the destiny of any creature, even of a pure spirit, such as the angel. To see God face to face, as He is in Himself, belongs by natural right only to God Himself. The gift, then, of the beatific vision is above the natural demands of all possible created natures. That is why the beatific vision is called supernatural in its very entity. It is simply beyond the reach of the natural demands of any created nature.

Supernatural life and actions

The beatific vision is not only the goal of man in the supernatural state to which he has been restored by Christ, but it is the norm and measure of man's entire life and of all his activities. Man's life and his actions count only inasmuch as they serve to lead him to that supernatural goal.

But no activity of man could naturally lead him, by way of merit, to a supernatural goal. He will have to obtain from God a new activity and a new "soul" from which that activity will spring. In other words, his soul and its powers must be elevated to the plane of the supernatural. The elevation of man's soul and its faculties to the plane of the supernatural is due to God's free grant of grace. By the gift of sanctifying grace, man's

soul is made to live with supernatural life; it is made to live with the only kind of life which counts now, the life which Christ came to give and give more abundantly. Sanctifying grace is not merely supernatural life; it is *eternal* supernatural life. As long as man possesses it, he is God's friend, he is stamped with the title of heir to eternal heaven; he is directed entirely to the goal of life. Moreover, grace, both actual and sanctifying, will give man the power of acting with supernatural action. This supernatural action will increase the supernatural life within him and will merit for him more and more of the eternal happiness in the beatific vision with God.

The attitude of God towards man will be one of constant giving of grace. To those men who, because of sin, are not alive with the new life, God will give constant helps in the form of good thoughts and good desires which will have as their aim to lead man to those divine channels from which the life of sanctifying grace will come. To those who are living with the life of sanctifying grace, God's help will be just as constantly given in the form of thoughts and desires which will aid man against death by mortal sin and help him to be more and more active in the good works, which will lead him with more and more merit to the goal of his life.

From this comparison between the natural and the supernatural life of man, we see the meaning of grace. It is the free gift of God which helps man to his supernatural destiny.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Do the benefits of the Redemption come to man without his co-operation?
2. What are the benefits of the Redemption?
3. What is meant by saying that man is restored to a supernatural destiny?
4. What destiny is natural to man?
5. How would man reach his natural destiny?

6. Would man in the purely natural state be subject to concupiscence?
7. In the purely natural state would man be able without an added help of God to avoid serious sin?
8. Can a creature have the beatific vision as its natural destiny?
9. To what being is the beatific vision natural?
10. What gives man supernatural life and supernatural activity?

CHAPTER XII

EXISTENCE OF ACTUAL GRACE

Sanctifying grace gives title to beatific vision

In beginning the discussion concerning the two kinds of internal grace which are given to man, actual grace and habitual grace, we take as our starting point a truth which is supremely fundamental, one of the foundation stones of the whole doctrine of divine grace. It is this: Man has a supernatural destiny, the beatific vision. It will be actually given to him, only if he has a right to it. Man must be able to point out in himself something which shows a strict title to the beatific vision. Now, man cannot have this right naturally; there is nothing in him, either in his nature or in his actions, which could be a title to a supernatural destiny. Since, then, God has decreed that without such a title, he cannot reach his destiny, God will make it possible for man to possess the right. God could accomplish this, either by freely granting the right to man without any co-operation on man's part, or He could demand that only through man's co-operation would the title to eternal happiness come to him. We know from Revelation that God chose the latter plan. Sanctifying grace is to give the title to glory; it will make the man who possesses it an heir to the beatific vision.

Method of acquiring sanctifying grace

To acquire sanctifying grace, man must co-operate with God by making use of those means which are constituted by God as the sources from which that grace would come. Those who have not reached the use of reason, and so cannot themselves co-operate in the strict sense, will have to depend on other men to do the co-operating for them. This will be done by the application to these children of the Sacrament of Baptism. Through

Infants

that sacrament sanctifying grace, the title to heaven, will be given. Those who have reached the use of reason and

Adults

of free will, will have to co-operate for themselves. They must freely choose to make use of those means from which sanctifying grace springs. If these persons have not yet been regenerated in Baptism, they must freely be baptized; if they have been regenerated, but have, through mortal sin, lost sanctifying grace, they must make use of those means of grace established for those who have sinned after Baptism. Those means used, sanctifying grace, the title to heaven, will be restored to them.

The title of merit

But the beatific vision will be given to adults on another title also—the title of merit. Revelation tells us that we can merit heaven. In the description of the Last Judgment given by Our Lord, as narrated in the 25th Chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Christ pictures Himself as the Judge granting eternal happiness to the just as the reward of their good works. Heaven will be theirs, then, not only on the title of heredity, but on the title of merit as well. It is a title of strict merit. St. Paul calls it the "crown of justice, which the Lord, the just judge, will give me on that day"; it is a reward for good works, meted out according to justice.

Necessity of supernatural acts

Now, just as no man could acquire the title of heredity to heaven unless God by the free gift of sanctifying grace gave him that title, so no man can, through his actions, merit heaven as a reward unless God gives him a free gift which will give to those actions the power of meriting a supernatural reward. They will have to become proportionate to the reward. This free gift is, once more, divine grace, making man's free actions supernatural.

One more truth from Revelation, and we shall have laid down the foundation of the Doctrine of Divine Grace. We said that an adult could not gain sanctifying grace without freely approaching the sources from which, by divine plan, that grace must come. This free approach,

Revelation tells us, must not be a mere natural act, even though it be a good natural act. It, too, will have to be supernatural. Though it will not merit sanctifying grace, it will have some proportion to it—it will be in the plane above the natural. Here, again, God must step in with a free gift, making the free acts by which a man seeks the title to heaven, supernatural acts. These acts will not of themselves give man sanctifying grace, nor will they merit it; they will, however, properly dispose man to receive it through the channels of grace. This free approach is referred to by Our Lord when He says, "No one can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me, draw him" (John VI, 44). No one can approach Christ, the source of supernatural life, the vine from which all life in the branches must come, unless, first of all, the Father draw him. A mere natural approach will not avail; God, with the free gift of grace, must make man's free approach supernatural.

This, in brief, is the divine plan of man's progress to his eternal goal. It tells us clearly and with divine certainty that no progress to eternal happiness is had or can be had without the grace of God. It tells us the meaning of grace so clearly that we need not try to fashion a human definition of grace; we have its definition formulated by Divine Revelation. Grace is a supernatural gift of God given to man to enable him to direct himself to the beatific vision.

Grace is either permanent or actual

From Revelation we know that the graces given internally to man are of two kinds—one a permanent gift, called sanctifying grace; the other, a transient, passing gift, called actual grace. In this second part of the volume, we shall first investigate the nature of actual grace; in the last chapters, we shall examine the nature of sanctifying grace. As to those graces which are external, there is no need of special treatment here. External graces are supernatural gifts, not given internally to

man, but placed outside of him for the sole purpose of aiding him to acquire internal grace and use it properly. Among these external graces are the preaching of the Gospel, the Sacraments, the Church, miracles, special acts of Divine Providence placing man in external conditions favorable to the salvation of his soul, or removing him from external conditions which might place his salvation in danger.

Actual grace—known only from Revelation

Grace given in the form of a transient gift is called actual grace. How can we know of the existence of actual grace? Our senses certainly cannot perceive it. We are not conscious of it through our spiritual faculties of will and intellect. Mere reason cannot argue to its existence, since all grace is supernatural, and mere reason must limit itself to the natural. We can know its existence only from the word of God.

Existence of actual grace—article of faith

The Second Council of Orange (529 A.D.) defined that the proper desire of obtaining faith cannot be had except through a grace of God. Now, this grace of God is not a permanent grace; it is given merely to help man to form in his will the desire of faith. That desire itself is an act of the will, and, since all acts of creatures are of necessity transient, the grace given to enable man to form the desire of faith must also be merely transient.

In the Seventh Canon, the same Council defines that man cannot of his own natural power, think or will in order to his salvation; he needs the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

"If anyone assert that, by the power of nature, and without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who grants to all men the disposition believingly to accept the truth, man is able rightly to think or choose anything good pertaining to eternal salvation, or to assent to salutary, that is, evangelical preaching, such a one is deceived by a heretical spirit."

God must freely offer a supernatural gift to man's mind

and will to enable him to have thoughts and desires which avail for salvation. But could not this grace be, not a passing gift given directly to the mind and will, but the permanent gift of sanctifying grace? It is true that some theologians teach, with some degree of probability, that a man who possesses sanctifying grace can have supernatural thoughts and desires from the power of sanctifying grace, without any need of a grace given directly to the mind and will. But the Council of Orange is speaking, not only of the just, but of all men, just and sinners. The sinner cannot acquire sanctifying grace unless he first prepare his soul with supernatural thoughts and desires. The Council assures us that, without grace, he cannot have these thoughts and desires; that grace cannot be the permanent gift of sanctifying grace, because the man is a sinner. It can only be the passing gift of grace helping him to have thoughts and desires which avail for salvation.

Holy Scripture

What the Council of Orange said was merely a repetition of the doctrine of Holy Scripture. There is no possibility of a thought or desire availing for salvation without the grace of God: "For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will" (Philip II, 13). "Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God" (II Cor. III, 5).

Paul is evidently speaking of actions of the will and mind which are salutary, that is, which avail for salvation. And he states as universally true that no man can, without grace, have a salutary thought or desire. This in the case of a sinner, who has not sanctifying grace, can be nothing but a transient grace given to enable him to think and will properly.

Our Lord Himself declared the same truth when He spoke the words, which we cited before: "No one can come to me unless the Father who hath sent me, draw him."

Even the first approach to God on the part of a sinner, the first steps in coming to God, consisting in acts of faith, hope and repentance, need the gift of grace.

Tradition

In this question, as in many others concerning Divine Grace, we shall let the authority of St. Augustine represent the tradition of the Church. He it was, who explained and defended the Revealed Doctrine of grace so fully and decisively that no one can rightly deny him the position of authoritative spokesman of the Church on the question of grace. We now quote a passage from the Enchiridion of St. Augustine, in which he teaches the necessity of grace for all the stages on the way to salvation. He does not explicitly speak of transient graces; but in asserting that sinners ("the unwilling," he calls them) cannot will properly without grace, he asserts the necessity of transient grace to aid the sinner to make his first approach to God. St. Augustine says:

"Surely, if no Christian will dare to say this: 'It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth,' lest he should openly contradict the Apostle, it follows that the true interpretation of the saying (Rom. IX. 16.): 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,' is that the whole work belongs to God, who both prepares the good will that is to be helped, and assists it when it is prepared. For the good will of man precedes many of God's gifts, but not all; and it must itself be included among those which it does not precede. We read in Holy Scripture, both 'God's mercy shall prevent me' (Ps. LVIII, 11), and 'Thy mercy will follow me' (Ps. XXII, 11). It precedes the unwilling to make him willing; it follows the willing to render his will effectual. Why are we taught to pray for our enemies, who are plainly unwilling to lead a holy life, unless it be that God may work willingness in them? And why are we admonished to ask that we may receive, unless it be that He who has created in us the wish, may Himself

satisfy the same? We pray, then, for our enemies, that the mercy of God may precede them, as it has preceded us; we pray for ourselves, that His mercy may follow us" (C. 32).

Another method of proving existence of actual grace

We demonstrated the existence of actual grace from the Revealed Truth that a man who is not in the state of sanctifying grace is unable, without the assistance of grace, to have any salutary thoughts or desires. Because this grace cannot be sanctifying grace, we are to conclude that the grace is actual grace; merely a passing help, not permanent grace.

In another way, however, we can know the existence of actual grace. In a later chapter it will be shown that even a just man, that is, one in the state of sanctifying grace, cannot persevere in grace, cannot avoid grave sin in the face of a long stretch of serious temptations, unless he receive, in addition to the sanctifying grace he already possesses, a special grace to help him to resist sin. This special grace must, therefore, come in the form of passing gifts enabling him to withstand temptation.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What titles to eternal salvation can man obtain?
2. Why cannot man secure these titles by natural acts?
3. What is the difference between the method of gaining the title to salvation prescribed for adults and that prescribed for those who have not reached the use of reason?
4. What is the difference between internal and external graces?
5. Why cannot we prove the existence of actual grace by the mere use of our reason?
6. Prove from the 2nd Council of Orange the existence of actual grace.
7. Do all theologians teach that a man in the state of sanctifying grace needs an actual grace for the performance of every supernatural act?
8. Prove from St. Paul's Epistles the existence of actual grace.
9. Prove from Our Lord's statement the existence of actual grace.
10. What authority has St. Augustine on the general subject of grace?

CHAPTER XIII

NATURE OF ACTUAL GRACE

In the preceding chapter the existence of actual grace was shown from Revelation. In demonstrating its existence, we learned something about its nature. It became clear that actual grace is a supernatural gift of God, a passing gift of God, which enabled man to perform salutary acts. But much more has to be known before an adequate notion of actual grace is had.

In this chapter we shall try to gather together into a brief compass, from Holy Scripture, Tradition and the teaching of the Church, all the elements which constitute actual grace.

Actual grace aids the intellect and will

At the very first step of our search we are made aware that actual grace is an *effect produced in man,* giving him the power to have salutary thoughts and salutary desires. A salutary thought or desire is one which positively leads man to his supernatural destiny. The intellect and will left to their own natural powers can have, at the most, merely naturally good thoughts and desires, which can avail in no way to lead man to a destiny which is above the natural. With the advent of actual grace, these faculties attain a new power, a new energy; not a mere increase of energy, but the addition of an energy of a higher order. Actual grace energizes mind and will to a new mode of operation. In what this "newness" of operation consists is not fully clear; but Revelation leaves no room for doubt that actual grace gives to mind and will operations naturally impossible to these faculties. Just as the material eyes of man cannot see an angel, so the mind of man cannot, with its mere natural power, have a

salutary thought. Just as the sensitive appetite of hunger for food cannot long for the delights of intellectual pleasure, so the will of man cannot, with its merely natural power, have a salutary desire.

Actual grace, then, illuminates the intellect and inspires the will; it gives the intellect the light needed to think in a salutary way; it gives the will the energy to have a salutary desire. It is a divine touch, putting supernatural energy into the faculties.

Actual grace is direct divine contact with man's soul

More than this, God comes into *immediate contact* with the faculties. It is not sufficient to say that the action of God in energizing the faculties consists in proposing through outside aids of preaching, good example and other external graces, good objects the knowledge of which is apt to lead to salutary action.

This direct contact proved

From the manner in which Holy Scripture and Tradition and the Church speak of actual grace, we have to conclude that it is something which is not merely an outside aid but an internal aid, necessary to salutary thought and desire—an internal aid directly applied to the intellect and the will.

Without fully repeating here the testimony from Scripture and Tradition and the Second Council of Orange, quoted in the last chapter, it will be sufficient to recall that this threefold testimony declared:

1. That we have not naturally the power to have salutary thoughts and desires; the power comes from a free gift of God.

2. That external graces, as for instance preaching and good example, do not suffice to give us the power of salutary thought and desire. Even after external graces have proposed to us the sacred doctrines of faith and the goodness of virtuous action, our intellect and will are still incapable, of themselves, without internal divine grace, of salutary thought and desire.

Proved from Council

The truth of these two assertions is clear from what the Second Council of Orange declared: "If anyone assert that, by the power of nature, and without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who grants to all men the disposition believingly to accept the truth, man is able rightly to think or choose anything good pertaining to eternal salvation, or to assent to salutary, that is, evangelical preaching, such a one is deceived by a heretical spirit" (Can. 7).

The Council here says that even after a man has heard the salutary preaching of the Gospel, he is still incapable of having salutary thoughts and desires unless he receive from God an additional grace—illumination and inspiration.

Proved from Scripture

St. Paul teaches the same truth clearly—mere external divine aid is not sufficient. He most definitely asserts that the external aids of preaching and evangelical labors are utterly incapable of bringing a man to salutary thought and desire unless God work internally, through grace, on the soul. This teaching of St. Paul is all the more striking, coming as it does from one who considered preaching of the Gospel so necessary that he never rested from his work of spreading the Gospel. He says:

"I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase. Therefore, neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase" (I Cor. III, 6, 7).

According to St. Paul, then, the action of divine grace is like the action of bringing life to a plant. The gardener cannot give life to the plant, the Creator alone can do that. The gardener plants, and waters, and watches, and cares for the plant, but God alone gives the increase, only the divine touch can energize the plant with life.

So, in bringing salutary life to the minds and wills of unbelievers, Apollo and Paul and all the preachers of the Gospel are mere gardeners. Paul planted the seed when

he first proclaimed the New Revelation; Apollo continued the work by watching and caring that the Truth was kept clear in the minds of those to whom the Gospel had been preached, but it was God alone who could give the minds and wills of the hearers that divine touch which would put salutary life in their thoughts and desires.

St. Paul states the same truth in the words from the Second Letter to the Corinthians, quoted in the preceding chapter:

"Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God" (III, 5).

These words mean that in no sense at all are we, of ourselves—of our own natural power—capable of having a salutary thought. Now, if after hearing the Gospel, we could, without an internal grace of God, without a direct divine contact on the soul, have a salutary thought, that thought would have come from our natural power alone; we should, of ourselves, have thought in a supernatural way. St. Paul declares this to be impossible.

St. Augustine

Let us hear St. Augustine teach the same truth: "Instruction and admonition are external aids, but He who controls the hearts has His seat in heaven" (Tract. in Joan. 3, 13).

We have not yet a complete notion of actual grace. But, before moving on in our search, it is well to gather together our findings. What we have found is this:

1. Actual grace is a divine gift not demanded or called for by our nature; that is, it is supernatural.
2. It is a passing, transient gift, a momentary help given to man to help him in his actions.
3. It gives to man a power which he has not naturally —the power of having salutary thoughts and desires.
4. Actual grace is not a mere external aid, such as

the preaching of the Gospel; it is an internal aid. It is something happening in man, and as a result of God acting on man directly.

5. In giving actual grace, God certainly acts directly on the intellect and the will.

Does God act directly on the will?

There have been, here and there, theologians who thought that there was no need of any direct contact between God and man's will. They thought that when God acted directly on the intellect, and gave it the supernatural power of eliciting a salutary thought, the will would be able to elicit a salutary desire without the need of any divine action directly touching it; the action of the will, they said, is so closely connected with the action of the mind that, once the thought of a man is made supernatural and proposes to the will the supernatural motives of action, the will can act on those motives and act in a way that is salutary.

This explanation, however, is commonly rejected. It appears to be at variance with Tradition and the teaching of the Councils. Tradition, especially in the writings of St. Augustine and the Councils of Orange (second) and Milevi, distinguish between the divine illumination of the intellect and the divine inspiration of the will; they assign both to the Holy Spirit without suggesting in the least that the inspiration of the will does not depend on God's action in exactly the same way as the illumination of the intellect; in fact, when describing the inspiration of the will, they do so in the same terms which they use in describing the illumination of the intellect. They undoubtedly taught that God acted directly on the mind; since they describe His action on the will and His action on the mind in exactly the same terms, it seems conclusive that they thought that God acts directly on the will as well as on the intellect.

In the seventh canon of the Council of Orange, the

Council asserts that even the hearing of the Gospel does not suffice to enable a man "to think or choose anything good pertaining to salvation"; that man is not able to think or choose in a way that avails to salvation "without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Ghost."

Here, then, is no indication that God acts directly on the intellect, and only *indirectly* on the will.

The Second Council of Milevi (418 A.D.), in its fourth canon, speaks even more clearly: it refers to illumination and inspiration as two gifts of God—"since both are gifts of God." The full text of the canon is:

"If anyone assert that this same grace of God, granted through Our Lord Jesus Christ, helps to avoid sin only for the reason that it opens and reveals to us an understanding of the commandments, so that we may know what we should desire and what we should avoid; but that it is not granted to us by the same [grace] to desire and be able to do that which we know we ought to do, let him be anathema. Since the Apostle says, 'Knowledge puffeth up, charity edifieth, buildeth up,' it is exceedingly wrong to believe that we have the grace of Christ for that which puffeth up and not for that which buildeth up, since *both are gifts of God,* to know what we must do and to have the wish to do it, so that with charity building up within us, knowledge might not puff us up. Just as it is written of God, 'Who teacheth men knowledge,' so also is it written, 'Charity is from God.' "

St. Augustine indicates no distinction between the nature of God's action on the will and His action on the intellect:

"Now even Pelagius should frankly confess that this grace is plainly set forth in the inspired Scriptures. . . . Let him distinguish between knowledge and love, as they ought to be distinguished, because 'knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.' And then knowledge no longer puffeth up when charity builds up. And inasmuch as each

is the gift of God (although one is less and the other greater), he must not extol our righteousness above the praise which is due to Him who justifies us, in such a way as to assign to the lesser of these two gifts the help of divine grace, and to claim the greater one for the human will . . ." (De grat. Chr. c. 26, n. 2).

"A man's free will, indeed, avails for nothing except to sin, if he knows not the way of truth; and even after his duty and his proper aim shall begin to become known to him, unless he also take delight in and feel a love for it, he neither does his duty, nor sets about it, nor lives rightly" (De spir. et litt. c. 3, n. 5).

"For we often see what ought to be done, and yet do it not; because it delighteth us not to do it, and we desire it may delight us. The intellect flieth in advance; and the weak affection of men followeth slowly, and sometimes followeth not at all" (Enarr. in Ps. 118, serm. 8, n. 4).

How actual grace gives power to act supernaturally

Actual grace, then, which gives man the power to have salutary thoughts and desires, is an effect produced in the intellect and will by the direct action of God. But what is that effect in itself? After God has touched the intellect, what is left there as the trace of the divine action? After God has touched the will, what mark has He left there? We know with certainty that that "something" left there as the result of God's action, gives the power of supernatural action, but we do not know with certainty what that "something" is, nor how it helps man to act supernaturally. In other words, we are sure of the fact, but we are not sure of the "how."

Various explanations are suggested. They can be reduced to two:

First explanation

First explanation: In regard to actual grace given to the intellect, this is what happens: a morally good objec is presented to the mind—as, for instance, assisting th sick, forgiving injuries, holding back the cutting remark

receiving Holy Communion. This object may be presented from outside; a preacher's words may present it. Or it may be presented by a man's own internal faculties; the memory may cause it to spring up and rest before the intellect. According to the natural law of psychology, the mind would think about the object presented. If left to itself, to its own natural powers, the intellect would elicit a thought about that object which would be a natural thought. It might be a good thought, but it would not be supernatural. At the very instant in which the intellect begins its thought, God steps in and acts on the intellect during the entire process of the thought. He divinely assists the entire thought; the thought from beginning to end is in contact with God's action. This assistance is not demanded by the intellect by a natural demand of its nature; it is gratuitous, supernatural, and supernaturalizes the thought entirely. The real cause of the thought is not the intellect alone, but the intellect and God.

In regard to the actual grace given to the will, the process is this: the intellect presents its supernatural thought to the will and shows the will the goodness of this or that action. Left to its own natural power, the will would react with a mere natural reaction—a reaction of like—a reaction of desire. This first reaction would be indeliberate, it would be that first necessary leaning which the human will shows towards anything which is presented to it as "good." Whether it be morally good, or merely good in the sense of being pleasant or desirable in some other way—pleasant to the eye, for instance, or the taste—this "good" thing causes the will to reach out with desire. That is how our will is made. Before it really wakes up to the situation, before it starts weighing both sides of the little (or big) argument concerning this "good" thing which has been brought to the door of the will by the intellect, before it stands up to exercise its

full power of free choice by rejecting or accepting the good—there is the unavoidable attraction to what it likes and the unavoidable repulsion from what it dislikes.

Now, when a supernaturally good object is presented by the intellect to the will, the will is naturally attracted, and naturally desires the object; but at the very instant when that natural and indeliberate motion of desire is launching into motion, God steps in and assists the beginning, middle and end of the entire indeliberate desire. By reason of the gratuitous, supernatural assistance of God, the indeliberate act of the will is supernaturalized.

Then the will awakens to the sense of its freedom and power of choice. If it chooses to go on, deliberately desiring the supernaturally good object, it can do so, and God's grace will continue to assist the will. If the will choose to go on, it is said to correspond with God's grace; it freely follows the lead of God's directing grace. If the will chooses not to go on, if it deliberately refuses to choose the good, it is said to reject God's grace.

Second explanation

Second explanation: This second method of explaining the manner in which actual grace works on the intellect and will differs from the first in the following details:

1. In helping the intellect and the indeliberate act of the will, God finishes His part first, finishes before the faculty begins. He leaves in the faculty some divinely produced supernatural quality; thereupon, the faculty proceeds to act and, with the aid of this quality, to act supernaturally.

2. In helping the deliberate act of the will, God acts anew with a new, distinct effect. This effect is a quality placed in the will before the "deliberateness" of the will begins.

A difficulty answered

"There does not seem to be any use for all the human energy expended by priests in preaching the Gospel, in scattering over the world written explanations of the faith, or in working on the minds and wills of men by pictur-

ing to them the supreme value of virtue and the tragic futility of sin." It is not hard to imagine someone urging this objection.

Suppose the Church should send to all its priests, whether in cities of the Christian world, or in missionary fields in pagan countries, a printed pamphlet containing this admonition: "Priests, missionary or otherwise, must remember that their work is useless; nothing that you do is of any avail until God, by the Divine Touch of His grace does His work. 'Paul's work is nothing; the work of Apollo is nothing; it is only God's work that counts.'" Would not the priests feel inclined to cease from their labors? Would they not be tempted to say, "Well, if God's work is the only work that counts, it is only reasonable to let God do it all."

In answering this very natural objection, the first thing to be done is to make sure that we understand what the Son of God thought of the utility of preaching the Gospel, and what St. Paul himself thought of it. Let their actions speak. Christ spent three years preaching the Gospel. St. Paul spent many more years at the same work; his insistence on the need of preaching made him so unpopular with the enemies of God that they took his life. Both Christ Our Lord, and His heroic helper, Paul, realized that unless God added His work of internally touching the minds and wills of the hearers with grace, men could not believe and be saved. And yet, neither Christ nor Paul would admit that their preaching was useless. When Christ was ready to leave this world and was about to ascend into heaven, His message to His Apostles was, "Preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark XVI, 15). "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. XXVII, 19-20).

Did Christ send His Apostles on a mission which would be utterly useless? It is blasphemous to say that God

makes sport of men; and blasphemy it would be, of the highest order, to say that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, commanded the Apostles and all their successors to spend their lives in going through a mere formal routine of useless motions. St. Paul, looking at the work done by himself and Apollo, called himself a mere "planter," and Apollo a mere "waterer"; but with all his unfeigned humility, he never admitted that he and Apollo were tiring themselves out in unceasing, vigorous, unselfish, but useless motions. By their actions, Christ and Paul speak out the answer.

Their words, too, tell us that they did not look on preaching the Gospel as useless. Far from saying that, their words declare that it is God's ordinary law that faith, that act by which a man accepts in a supernatural way what God reveals, that act which is the base, the root, the foundation of all supernatural life and action, comes "from hearing." St. Paul proclaims the supreme necessity of preaching:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

"How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? Or, how shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. X, 13, 14).

Christ states the same connection between faith and the hearing of the word:

"Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

"He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark XVI, 15, 16).

There is no doubt, then, that God gives to the external hearing of the word of God, and to external graces in general, not only a prominent part, but a necessary part as well. Not that He could not bring a man to salutary

thoughts and desires without outside helps; through His internal grace alone He could effect this. We cannot say that there are no instances in which He does dispense with outside aid, at least without the outside aid of preaching. But it is evident that the ordinary law is, that external graces come first, as a preparation for the internal work of God on the soul. Though the supernatural life is a new life, it is not had at the expense of the death of the natural life. The supernatural order of things does not destroy the natural order—it is built upon it. In leading a man to salutary thoughts and desires, God accommodates Himself to the ordinary process of human thoughts and desires. Our thoughts, naturally, come from our contact with outside objects, with what we hear and see; our desires and choices naturally occupy themselves with the "good" and "bad" presented to the will by the mind.

Men are brought to believe God's word and to follow God's commands by the hearing of the Gospel; they are brought to repentance by hearing of the punishment of sin, or by viewing the horrors of a sudden and unprovided death. As they hear and see these things, their minds and wills, if left to themselves, would have thoughts and desires which are naturally good. Here God steps in with His internal grace and makes supernatural the thought and desire which otherwise would be merely natural. The intellect and will, ready to take the step—but on the merely natural plane of action—are met at the very outset by the touch of the divine hand, which raises them up to the plane of the supernatural. The divine action has given to those acts a new character, a new physical character, which puts them in line with the glorious supernatural destiny for which man is made.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Is actual grace an effect produced in man?
2. Does God act directly on the intellect when He gives actual grace?
3. Why do some theologians say that when God gives actual grace there is no need of direct action on the will?
4. Show that actual grace implies a direct divine action on the intellect.
5. Give the first explanation of the action of actual grace on the faculties.
6. Give the second explanation of the action of actual grace on the faculties.
7. What are external graces? What is their purpose?
8. What did St. Paul say concerning the need of immediate divine contact with the faculties?
9. Show that Christ considered the work of preaching the Gospel important.
10. Show that St. Paul considered the work of preaching the Gospel important.

CHAPTER XIV

MAN'S NATURAL CAPACITY FOR GOOD

Introduction to question of necessity of grace

Having already shown that God gives man a supernatural gift called actual grace, which supernaturalizes man's thoughts and desires, we face the next question, a question of extreme importance: "How necessary is actual grace for eternal salvation?" And since, for those who have grown up to the use of free will and reason, eternal salvation is had only by avoiding sin and doing good works, this question really means: "How necessary is actual grace for the avoidance of sin; and how necessary is actual grace for the performance of good works?"

Great importance of question

This question is of the greatest practical importance to every man who has a soul to save and a God to serve. If we learn that actual grace is so necessary that without it we cannot perform good works or permanently avoid sin, it becomes of prime importance to us to find out what is God's rule concerning the divine distribution of grace, and what we must do to fall under the law of that distribution in such a way as to save our souls.

The obvious way of finding out whether a person needs a certain thing is to determine whether the person can get on without it. Eye-glasses are not necessary to a person whose eyes are normally healthy, because he can see perfectly well without eye-glasses. "Is a mother's assistance necessary to a child's successful walking journey from one end of the room to the other?" To be able to answer this question, you must know whether or not the child can get along without the mother. I look at the child. It is holding on to a chair. It lets go, balances itself for a moment, reaches out one foot to make the first

step—and then falls to the floor. I am not rash in concluding that outside assistance is a necessity if *that* child is going to make *that* journey.

"Is actual grace necessary for man to make the journey to eternal happiness?" It is if man cannot get on without it.

First, then, we shall find out what man can do of his own natural powers unassisted by God's actual grace. Can he elicit good thoughts and good desires? If he can, are they salutary thoughts and desires, the only sort which count for eternal life? Can he keep clear of serious sin in the face of the many, severe temptations of a lifetime? Can he keep clear of serious sin even in the face of one severe temptation? Not until we have found the answer to these questions, shall we be able to answer the question "How necessary is actual grace?"

Man and the pessimists

Extremists have, in their answers to these questions, made of man either a sorry mass of thorough uselessness and continual, unavoidable sinfulness or, on the other hand, a kind of "near-God" to whom all things are possible. The first class of extremists, looking at the fall of man in Adam, saw original sin as a black, all-pervading moral poison, which took away man's free will and made every act of his a sin. Luther, for a time at least, held this doctrine of Pessimism. Man, to these pessimists, was so wicked and perverted by original sin that even the Redemption of Christ did not cure man of his moral leprosy —it did no more than throw the cloak of Christ's merits and satisfactions over man. Man's guilt remained, but Christ's cloak would hide man's sin from the sight of the All-Holy God.

Man and the exaggerated optimists

Over against the doctrine of depressing belittlement of man, was the doctrine of exaggerated Optimism. Like all exaggerated optimism, it blinded itself to certain human facts which could not be ignored if man was to be justly estimated. It refused to see original sin. It re-

fused to look upon man as one who had been stripped of much of his glory and power by original sin; it pretended to see in man one who needed no supernatural help from God to aid him to his eternal destiny.

The Cross gives true estimate of man

These two heretical systems were insults to the Cross of Christ. One said that man was so evil that even the death of God Himself could not take sin away from him; the other said that man was so powerful in good that the death of Christ was uncalled for. It was merely a praiseworthy gesture of the divine desire to show man how life should be led, but it was not the one thing by which men would get the very power to lead the life.

Truth as a rule stands in the middle here; that is where the Cross of Christ stands. Beside that Cross, the Church of Christ must stand to learn what man really is, and how much he needed the grace which comes only from Christ. She learns the proper estimate of man and the necessity of Christ's grace from One who knew all that was to be known about God, and knew all that was to be known about man—Jesus Christ, God and Man.

The Church learned that man was not radically evil; not every act of his was a sin; he had the natural power to perform acts which were naturally good. She learned, too, that man was not naturally all-powerful to work his way of eternal life in the beatific vision; he needed the grace of God; without it, he would inevitably fall before the onslaught of temptation, and without it, no act of his would avail for his supernatural destiny.

Not every act of a sinner is a sin

There have always been those who thought they were honoring God by belittling man. As though God's infinite greatness was only the result of a comparison with man's smallness. As though God's greatness is not manifest more in a creature of worth than in a creature that is worthless. To say that man, after being subjected to original sin, or personal sin, became so worthless that every act of his was a sin, does not make God great; it

makes of God an absurdity. A man who is physically forced to continual sin by the force of his own nature is an absurdity—a sin which is not freely done is an absurdity which cannot exist. Nor can the Creator of such an absurdity exist.

Article of faith

Christ's Church teaches that it is false to say that every act of a man in the state of sin, original or personal, is a sin. The Council of Trent condemned with its anathema all those who, with Martin Luther, held that, before a man has been justified, all his acts are sins:

"If anyone shall say that all the works done before justification . . . are indeed sins . . . let him be anathema" (Sess. 6, can. 7).

Holy Scripture

The falsity of this more than gloomy doctrine is evident from Scripture. God exhorts sinners to "pray," to "give alms," to perform "works of mercy," that by these acts they might win from God the forgiveness of their sins. It is sheer blasphemy to say that God exhorts sinners to sin, or that God tells men that they can by sinful acts win forgiveness of sin. But if every act of a sinner were a sin, God would be doing precisely that.

Fathers

Some of those who taught that every act of a sinner was a sin, sought to prove that St. Augustine taught the same doctrine. It is true that St. Augustine emphasized the need of divine grace; at times he set up the opposition between supernatural action and sinful action so strongly that there seemed to be no place in between for actions which were not sins, and yet were not supernatural. He used such emphasis because, in his struggle with the Pelagians, the point on which emphasis had to be laid was: that man with his natural powers could not perform salutary acts availing to salvation. The Pelagians were teaching that man did not need divine grace to gain salvation; Augustine met their doctrine by his counter-doctrine that without grace no natural act counts for eternal life. It is not surprising that, in the heat of battle, he

seemed at times to depreciate the worth of man's natural acts. But Augustine certainly did not teach that every act of a sinner was a sin. A quotation from his treatise "On the Spirit and the Letter" makes it clear that he did not look on all acts of sinners as sins—he says that actions of sinners can be praiseworthy:

"If they, who by nature do the things contained in the law, must not be regarded as yet in the number of those whom Christ's grace justifies, but rather as among those whose actions (although they are those of ungodly men who do not truly and rightly worship the true God), we not only cannot blame, but actually praise, and with good reason, and rightly too, since they have been done, so far as we read or know or hear, according to the rule of righteousness" (C. 27, n. 48).

Man can perform naturally good works without the aid of grace

Can man, even in the state of sin, perform without the aid of grace, actual or sanctifying, actions which are naturally good? An act is naturally good when it is a free act which conforms to the natural law of God. Our reason tells us what the natural law is: It is God's decree, not freely made, but necessitated by God's Infinite Holiness, which obliges all men to observe and not to disturb the right order of things. For example, the right order demands that God be supreme, and that man freely recognize God's supremacy. This free recognition of God's supremacy would be a naturally good, moral act. Had man been left in the natural state and never raised to a supernatural destiny, such an act would have been meritorious, and would have availed for man's eternal natural happiness. The mere act of eating to preserve one's life is a naturally good act. The right order, sanctioned by God, is that men should eat to preserve their life—the act of the will deciding to put the body to the work of eating would be a morally good natural act if the eating were not done to excess or no other sinful element entered in.

How can it be shown that man by original sin did not lose his natural power of performing naturally good acts without the aid of any grace?

Holy Scripture assures us that not every act of a sinner is a sin. If that is so, then some of his acts are good. But this is not yet enough to prove our proposition; Scripture does not tell us of any good acts of sinners performed without actual grace. It simply assures us that sinners can perform good acts.

Our best argument is from the combined testimony of Scripture and reason. Scripture assures us that original sin did not so pervert man as to make every act of his a sin. Therefore some natural acts of man, free acts of course, are not sins. He can perform natural free acts which are not sins. Reason takes up the argument: These free, natural acts are conformed to the natural law (because they are not sinful. An act is either in conformity with the law or it is not); they are, then, naturally good acts.

"But why bother our minds in finding out what man's natural capacity is; we are living in the order of grace?" It is not a mere idle speculation. There is apt to be lingering even in the world today some mental effects of the doctrine of Luther and others—that depressing and false doctrine which would have men so poisoned by original sin that without God's grace every human action would be a sin.

Man without assistance of grace can know existence of God

It is common enough nowadays to find some persons who look upon an atheist, not with feelings of moral repulsion, but with feelings of pity. He is pitied because, as these persons think, in some strange way the gift of knowing God has not been granted to him. Now there is no harm in pitying an atheist, no more than there is in pitying any sinner. But there is something false in a pity which excuses an atheist. There is great falsity when the excuse is founded on the supposition—often subcon-

scious—that man owes it to God's grace alone that he can know that a God exists. A man who has not faith must not necessarily be blamed; but an adult who persists in denying God's existence deserves nothing but blame. He himself will not be able to say to God, His Judge, "I did not know You existed; You gave others the grace to know You, but You did not give the grace to me." God would answer him, "You did not need any grace; you needed only the light of your own reason, and that I gave to you."

The Church has always fought fearlessly for man's natural power to know God's existence without any aid of grace. In this fight for a proper estimate of man's natural capacity, she again stands in the middle—halfway between the extremists. On one side are the "minimizers" of man's natural power to know; on the other are the "maximizers." The first take man, tainted by the fall of Adam, and give him an intellect so clouded and blinded by original sin that it cannot look through creation to the Creator, unless the light of God's grace pierces the fog. The others take man, cast aside original sin as an absurd, pious fiction, and put into him an intellect which is practically divine. That intellect is not only to report to him what is truth; it is a creator of things; whatever that intellect cannot thoroughly understand is to be regarded as non-existent. These men make of man's intellect not only the speculative norm of things, the mirror which reflects truth, but the practical norm—"Whatever cannot present itself in a 'perfectly knowable way' to man's mind, is to be ruled out of existence." The only existence which counts, they say, is an existence knowable by man. First among the beings ruled out of existence by this proud rationalist gesture is God; God cannot be fully understood by man's mind, so God, if there be a God, must be content to be side-tracked, while godlike human thought speeds by on its search for truth.

With all the calm and force of sanity and truth, the Church of God speaks today as she has always spoken. In the Vatican Council, her clear voice sounded her doctrine:

"If anyone shall say that the one True God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be certainly known by the natural light of human reason through created things, let him be anathema" (Sess. 3, can. 1, Sect. 2).

In this solemn definition the Church was standing on the solid ground of Revelation, and was at the same time re-echoing the voice of human reason.

Holy Scripture

The inspired writer of the Book of Wisdom says that the same human power which knows the beauty and greatness of the created world, knows the Creator:

"For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the creator of them may be seen so as to be known thereby. . . . But then again they are not to be pardoned; for if they were able to know so much as to make a judgment of the world, how did they not more easily find out the Lord thereof?" (It was easier for them, according to the Sacred Writer, to come to a knowledge of the Creator, than to come to that full knowledge which they had of the wonders and depths of nature.) (XIII, 5-10.)

St. Paul says that a denial of God's existence is inexcusable, for the reason that the mere use of reason declares a God:

"For the invisible things of him [God] from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity. So that they are inexcusable.

"Because that, when they knew God, they have not glorified him as God or given thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened.

"For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. I, 20-23).

According to St. Paul, the atheistic Romans were not to be excused; their reason told them that there was a God, and that they should have honored Him properly.

Can fallen man avoid serious sin with his natural strength?

One last question concerning man's natural capacity for good. Can man without the help of God's grace keep free from serious sin? The answer of Catholic theology is this: Man's will has always enough physical power and freedom to avoid sin; even in the face of a lifetime of temptation, he would still have sufficient physical power of will to resist. But the force of his passions, in alliance with oft-repeated temptations from without, would ultimately so becloud his mind and weary his will that he would yield to sin. This incapability of resisting further would not be physical, because his will is always physically capable of resisting temptation; it is called a "moral incapability." God's grace is needed to overcome this moral incapability. That is what the theologians teach concerning man's natural power to avoid sin when there is question of a long period of serious temptations. (If there be question of avoiding one serious temptation, no certain answer can be given.)

The proof of the foregoing doctrine need not be given here. In the next chapter it will be shown that even a man in the state of sanctifying grace needs an additional, special actual grace to bring him safely through temptations of long standing and repeated occurrence. It is all the more true, then, that man with his mere natural power would need God's grace.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Is every free act of a sinner a sin?
2. Prove from Scripture that not every free act of a sinner is a sin.
3. Show that St. Augustine held the Catholic view on this question.
4. What is meant by a naturally good act?
5. Show that fallen man has the power of performing a naturally good act without the aid of grace.

6. Can man know God's existence through reason unaided by grace?
7. Why is atheism blameworthy?
8. What does St. Paul say of atheists?
9. What is meant by saying that man is always physically able to overcome temptation?
10. What is meant by saying that man, unaided by grace, has the "moral incapability" of successfully resisting a long series of severe temptations?

CHAPTER XV

NECESSITY OF ACTUAL GRACE FOR SALUTARY ACTS

Is actual grace necessary for salutary action?

We have already shown that God gives man actual grace, and that actual grace gives man the power of performing salutary acts. With the aid of this actual grace, man can positively direct himself to the beatific vision. If he has not sanctifying grace, actual grace gives him the power of performing acts which will dispose him to the reception of that sanctifying grace through the sacraments or an act of perfect love; if he has sanctifying grace, actual grace will positively direct him to the beatific vision by enabling him to merit more of that eternal reward.

The question which we shall discuss in this chapter is: "Is actual grace the only means of having a salutary act? Is actual grace necessary for a salutary act?" It may seem at first sight that this question has already been decided. Have we not already shown that actual grace gives us the power of performing salutary acts? That is true; we have shown that with actual grace, man can perform salutary acts. But it still remains for us to show that without actual grace, man could not perform salutary acts. We must determine, then, that the only possible way for man to perform a salutary act is to do it with the aid of an actual grace.

Catholic doctrine says "Yes"

Our question then is: "Is actual grace always necessary for a salutary act?" The answer of Catholic theology is this: For a sinner, that is, one who has not sanctifying grace, a salutary act is totally impossible without the assistance of actual grace. For a man in the state of sanc-

tifying grace, it is probable that there is a similar need of actual grace. The reason why some theologians think that a man in the state of sanctifying grace can perform a salutary act without the aid of an actual grace is, that sanctifying grace seems to them to be a sufficient help to the performance of a salutary act. There is no doubt, however, that all Catholic theologians teach the general doctrine of the Church, which says that some grace, either actual or sanctifying, is absolutely necessary for a salutary act.

Sinner needs actual grace for salutary act

We shall first apply our question to the case of a man who is not in the state of sanctifying grace. Can he perform any salutary act whatsoever without the aid of actual grace? As a matter of fact, we have already shown from Scripture and the Fathers and the decisions of the Church, that a sinner cannot perform the least salutary act without the aid of grace. This we did in the chapter which treated of the existence of actual grace; we proved the existence of actual grace from the fact that it was necessary for the salutary acts of a sinner. Accordingly, there is no need to rehearse in full the arguments for the necessity of actual grace for a sinner. It will be enough to recall to mind briefly the more important statements of Scripture:

"No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up in the last day" (John VI, 44).

"Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God" (I Cor. III, 5).

"I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase.

"Therefore, neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase" (I Cor. III, 6, 7).

Just man needs actual grace for salutary act

Granted that a sinner needs actual grace if he is to perform a salutary act, is it equally true that a just man, one in the state of sanctifying grace, needs the added assistance of actual grace before he has the power of performing salutary acts? Though the answer to this question cannot be given with certainty, it seems more than likely that even a just man needs an actual grace for his salutary acts. The reasons for saying this are drawn mainly from Scripture. St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Philippians, declares that it is God who works in us both to will and to accomplish salutary actions. His statement certainly includes the just; there is no doubt at all about that. But does the "working" which God does, even in the just, necessarily signify "working" through actual grace? That in the case of the sinner it must mean actual grace, is evident; but why could not God be said to work in the just man merely through sanctifying grace? Though the text is not so clear as to afford a certain answer, still it seems to emphasize the fact that God is actually "working in us" in every salutary act of the will which we elicit. It seems more logical to interpret "actual working" on the part of God as a transient act, a passing act—and that, of course, would be actual, not sanctifying, grace.

This same "actual working" of God with all men, just and unjust, in their salutary acts, seems to be indicated in the words of the Apocalypse. St. John, the writer of the Apocalypse, puts in the mouth of the Son of God the following words: "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (III, 30). The "actual working" of God on the souls of all men, just as well as unjust, is here indicated by the notion of "standing at the gate and knocking."

Another reason for asserting that even the just man needs actual grace for his salutary acts, is had from the

fact that, although sanctifying grace gives supernatural life to the soul, and the virtues which come with sanctifying grace, faith, hope and charity, and the infused moral virtues, are supernatural "faculties" of the soul giving the soul the power of performing salutary acts, still, to have a definite salutary act there must be a definite thought and desire about a definite object; this definite thought cannot come from sanctifying grace—sanctifying grace is not the immediate principle of action, but the principle of supernatural life itself; nor can this definite thought or desire come from the virtues, because they are merely "general" capacities of supernatural action; they cannot operate without being determined to some particular object any more than the natural intellect of man can think of a definite object if it be not determined to a definite object by some outside influence. We cannot have a thought unless some object outside the intellect act in some way or other on the intellect. Now, the supernatural virtues bear to supernatural action the same relation which the natural intellect and will bear to natural thought and desire; they have to be determined to some particular object before they can exert their supernatural power. If it is said, "But a mere external grace will be enough," a supernatural thought is proposed from outside, it passes naturally to the intellect and the will and then, with the aid of the virtues, the intellect and the will perform a salutary action. There is, however, one part of this process which seems to require an actual grace; the exciting or determining of the virtue to co-operate with the intellect and will in the salutary act ought to be supernatural itself. It is the proximate and immediate reason for the determination to a particular supernatural act. It seems contrary to all the requirements of a supernatural act to admit that a merely natural excitation or determination could be the proximate and immediate

reason of the determination of a supernatural act to a particular object.

The Pelagian heresy

The most prominent of the early heresies on the question of grace was the heresy of Pelagianism. It started as a reaction against Manichaeism. Manichaeism held that sin was unavoidable. Pelagianism taught that not only was sin avoidable without the grace of God, but that man was able to act in a supernatural way and to win his eternal salvation without the need of any internal grace of God. The Pelagians practically reduced the entire economy of the relation between God and man to what was natural. But, in doing this, they did not reduce man to what we know is man's natural state; they took all the gifts, which we know from Revelation to be supernatural and not man's due at all, and called them the natural possession of man. The beatific vision, the power of acting in such a way as to merit this reward—all this, according to them, was purely natural and wholly within man's power without any internal grace of God. The only grace which they admitted into their system was external grace, such as the preaching of the truths of religion; but even this was not necessary according to them. It merely made it easier for man to perform salutary acts; it did not give him the power itself. The originator of this false doctrine was Pelagius, a British lay monk, who came to Rome about the year 400.

Directly opposed to Holy Scripture

This doctrine of the Pelagians was directly against the teaching of Holy Scripture. Scripture teaches the utter impossibility of a salutary act without an internal grace of God; Pelagianism taught that man could win eternal salvation by his own acts, unaided by God's grace.

The Church denounced the doctrine of Pelagius on several occasions. We find the most clear condemnation in the Second Council of Orange, and in the Council of Trent:

The Council of Orange declared: "If anyone assert

that, by the power of nature, and without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who grants to all men the disposition believingly to accept the truth, man is able rightly to think or choose anything good pertaining to eternal salvation, or to assent to salutary, i.e., evangelical, preaching, such a one is deceived by a heretical spirit" (Can. 7).

The Council of Trent: "If anyone saith that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, is given only for this, that man may be able more easily to live justly and to merit eternal life, as if by free will, without grace, he were able to do both, though hardly indeed and with difficulty, let him be anathema" (Sess. 6, can. 2).

The very desire of a salutary act requires grace

The immediate condemnation of the doctrine of Pelagius by the official teachers of the Church did not drive out all traces of the error even from the minds of those who were disposed to accept the authoritative decision of the Church. Augustine had been combating the errors of Pelagianism for the space of some twenty years, when Cassian, the Abbot of St. Victor, endeavored to prove that the truth on the question of divine grace lay, not in the doctrine which Augustine was teaching, nor with the doctrine of Pelagius, but halfway between the two. His doctrine was called, because of its attempt to compromise between Pelagianism and the orthodox doctrine, semi-Pelagianism. It may be summed up, briefly, thus: "To gain eternal salvation, and to have supernatural action, man needs the internal grace of God; but this grace of God can be positively won from God by man's preliminary actions, which are purely natural." According to this doctrine, the first step in the process of salvation is desire on the part of man of salutary action as a means of eternal salvation. This desire is purely a natural action of man. But although it does not strictly merit that God should give grace, it gives man a real title to grace. God, thereupon, gives actual grace; with this

actual grace supernatural actions are elicited, until, finally, justification is had.

Despite the protestations of the semi-Pelagians that they did not claim for man's natural action the strict right to obtain grace from God, they, as a matter of fact, did teach that. According to them, God was really bound to answer with the gift of grace the demands of man's natural preliminary approach to God.

St. Augustine denounced semi-Pelagianism

St. Augustine denounced the "compromise" doctrine of the semi-Pelagians with the same vigor with which he had attacked Pelagianism. Both doctrines agreed in the one, false, fundamental note that man's natural action "demanded" from God that which was essentially supernatural. Augustine answered that grace which was "demanded" by nature was not grace. He insists that when Christ uttered the words, "Without me you can do nothing" (John XV, 5), He meant that without the free grace of God—in no way "demanded" by man's natural acts—man was unable to reach God in the beatific vision, was unable to be united to Him by sanctifying grace, was unable to make even the first approaches towards God by way of disposing himself for justification.

Semi-Pelagianism refuted from Scripture

The kernel teaching of the semi-Pelagians was that the first approaches to God consisted in purely natural desires, which, in some way or other, demanded that God give the gift of grace. They laid special emphasis on the desire of faith; the desire of faith was purely natural, they said, and yet it "demanded" from God the gift of faith. This was diametrically opposed to the teaching of Holy Scripture. Christ had taught that the first approach towards God needed God's grace; St. Paul insisted on the same inability of man, not only to accomplish a salutary act, but even to desire it. In the Gospel of St. John we hear Our Lord preaching the utter inability of man to make the first step towards God without the aid of grace: "No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath

sent me, draw him'' (John VI, 44). St. Paul teaches that all desire that has any avail for salvation, must come, not from ourselves, but from the grace of God: ''For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will'' (Philipp. II, 13).

Semi-Pelagianism refuted from Tradition

St. Augustine in his strenuous arraignment of semi-Pelagianism was not content to show how it went counter to the clear meaning of Holy Scripture, but also how it denied the doctrine which had been handed down in the teaching of the Fathers. After quoting the testimony of Cyprian and Ambrose, St. Augustine says:

''In whatever manner the word of God is spoken to man, beyond a doubt for man to hear it in such a way as to obey it, is God's gift. Wherefore, the above-mentioned, most excellent commentators on the divine declarations both preached the true grace of God as it ought to be preached, that is, as a grace preceded by no human deservings, and urgently exhorted to the doing of the divine commandments that they, who might have the gift of obedience, should hear what commands they ought to obey. For if any merits of ours precede grace, certainly it is the merit of some deed, or word, or thought, wherein also is understood a good will itself. But he very briefly summed up the kinds of all deservings who said, ''We must glory in nothing because nothing is our own.'' And he who says, ''Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power,'' did not pass over acts and words also, for there is no act or word of man which does not proceed from the heart and the thought'' (De Dono Persev. c. 19, n. 48, 49).

''Such doctors, and so great as these, when they say that there is nothing of which we may boast as if our own . . . and that our very heart and our thoughts are not in our own power . . . certainly attribute all these things to God's grace, acknowledge them as God's gifts, and testify that they came to us from Him, and are not from ourselves'' (*Ibid.* c. 19, n. 50).

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Is grace, either actual or sanctifying, needed for every salutary act?
2. Show that actual grace is needed for the salutary actions of a sinner.
3. Why is there not the same certainty about the necessity of actual grace for the salutary actions of a man in the state of sanctifying grace?
4. Give an argument from Scripture to show that even a just man needs actual grace to enable him to perform salutary acts.
5. Give an argument from the psychological process of a salutary thought.
6. What did Pelagius teach concerning the necessity of grace?
7. Show the error of his teaching.
8. What did the semi-Pelagians teach concerning the necessity of grace?
9. Show from Scripture the error in this teaching.
10. What did the Council of Trent say about the necessity of grace for salutary acts?

CHAPTER XVI

THE POWER OF CONCUPISCENCE

Summary of preceding chapter

In the last chapter it was shown that man is unable to perform a salutary act without the aid of the actual grace of God. A salutary act is one which positively "moves" man towards his eternal supernatural destiny; it moves the sinner towards God by disposing him for the reception of sanctifying grace in the sacraments, or through an act of perfect love; it moves the just man towards God by giving more supernatural life, and more title of merit to the reward. Since no natural act of man could have a proper proportion to a supernatural reward, the natural act of man would never be salutary unless it were "elevated" to the higher grade of the supernatural. This "elevation" must come from the grace of God. All this was established in the preceding chapter.

Medicinal grace

Actual grace, looked at from the viewpoint of its power to "elevate" the acts of man to a supernatural plane, is usually called by the technical name of "elevating grace" (*gratia elevans*). But actual grace has another function —there is something else it must do, else it would be but a half-favor on the part of God. It must help us to keep sin out of our lives. There would not be much consolation in knowing that we had the power of performing supernatural actions if we knew at the same time that sin was an obstacle against which we were practically helpless. It would not help us much to be lifted up to a supernatural plane if we realized at the same time that we were suffering from the cancer of concupiscence, which would sooner or later lead us to mortal sin, the death of the soul. Revelation assures us that the power of temp-

tation over us is so great that, left to our own natural strength, we should sooner or later succumb to grievous sin. Unless the same Revelation tells us that this disease of ours can be alleviated, we should be in a rather sorry plight. If we have in us the cancer of concupiscence, which is so powerful that, in spite of our physical freedom of will, we should ultimately give up the fight against sin, we expect that a good God would give us a remedy for this "moral disease." To our great consolation, Revelation, which gives us the sad news of our proneness to sin, also gives us the glad news that God has given us a "medicine" for our sickness. God has promised to give us grace which is medicinal in its power. This grace will be actual grace—that is, a transient, passing gift—to offset, in the face of temptation, the pull towards sin, which arises in us from concupiscence.

The power of concupiscence

There was no need for God through His Divine Revelation to tell us that temptation has great power over us. It is so evident to even a casual examiner of the history of human lives as to be one of the "primitive truths" in the moral order. By concupiscence is meant not merely the human passion which draws man with such force to sensual pleasure, but the sum total of all the longings with which man is beset because of the animal body which is his. By his body he is brought into contact with a world which has for him an eminent attraction. Not all of this attraction is sinful; a great part of it is not. But the part which is sinful makes such an appeal to man that there is in the life of every normal man who strives to do God's will a gigantic struggle. The senses of man, sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch, bring the world into contact with man; but it is not the contact which is had with a corpse, it is a contact full of life. By this contact man knows the world, his eyes show him the color and shape of things, his ears let in the sounds of the world, his taste brings to him the bitter and the sweet, his smell detects

Comes from the senses

foulness or perfume, his touch records the softness of things or their hardness, their smoothness or roughness, their heat or their cold. All the vast knowledge which mankind has gained is built upon the reports from the outside world sent in by these five busy reporters. They are helped by the internal senses—the imagination, which sits at the door of the intellect, and is always working at its post. It receives all the reports sent in by the five external senses, makes a sensitive photograph of all the details sent in, and flashes it before the spiritual intellect, so that the intellect may make its own immaterial picture, a real, spiritual thought. The internal sense of memory is a storehouse for the pictures made by the imagination; its duty is to bring out for the use of the intellect whatever pictures are needed.

Senses bring knowledge

In this life, thinking power of the soul, the intellect, and the willing power, the will, have a constant dependence on the reports of the outside world sent by the senses; and by "outside world" is meant everything outside the spiritual mind. The thought of the intellect rises far above the world of material things, it reasons to a Creator of that outside world, it perceives things that the reporting senses never were aware of—truth, honor, unselfishness, morality, dishonor, selfishness, and baseness —but the starting point must, in this life, always be the tiny material pictures developed by the sensitive faculties. The intellect reaches even God, but it can reach Him only by starting with the material creation of God. It can make a true picture of God, but only if it holds in its grasp a true picture of God's material creature.

Intellect and will depend on senses

This is, in brief, the marvelous and divinely given process of human thought. In this way man can come to know what is true and thoroughly good. In this way he is able to accomplish the highest act of which he is capable, the act of willing and choosing what his intellect pictures to him as thoroughly good, good for him as a

rational, immortal creature, and good in the estimation of the Creator.

Natural "disorder" in man

But that act of choosing what is really good is often an act of extreme difficulty. Man's household is always tending to disorder, a disorder which is all the more serious because it arises from the members of the household. If the sensitive faculties of man were totally apathetic, nonchalant reporters of fact, there would be no disorder. But the law of all faculties is that, left to themselves, they seek only what attracts them, what they like. The good, whether true or false good, is the only spur to the activity of a faculty. If man had a set of apathetic senses, he would have a set of idlers on his hands, and man would know nothing. If the senses, not apathetic, but tingling with the power of being attracted, could only "like" what was really good for man and good in God's sight, and so would never send into man's mind what would be harmful, there would be peace in man's household. Even if the senses themselves had the power of being attracted to what was bad for the entire man and bad in God's sight, there would be comparative peace and security, provided the ruler of the house, the will, had always the power of determining by sheer will force that the senses should not admit even into themselves "attractions," likes and dislikes which were not in accordance with the will of the Creator as manifested to man's mind by the law of right reason.

No concupiscence in Adam before he sinned

But although we were originally created in perfect order, Adam sinned and left us the heritage of comparative disorder. Adam and all of his descendants were by God's original plan to have what is called the gift of "integrity." This meant nothing more nor less than that the likes and dislikes of man's sensitive faculties were under the control of man's will. Man could not feel any pleasure, even of the senses, in a sinful object unless he deliberately willed it, unless the will deliberately opened up

the gates. In that state of integrity, there would still be a struggle in the doing of God's will, but the struggle would take place only in man's will. It would be the struggle of a glorious spiritual will to yield homage to the infinitely glorious will of the Creator.

Adam sinned with a mere "mind and will" sin. There was not in him that mighty "pull" of unrestrained, unreasonable, sensitive delight, urging him to forget God and remember only himself. The forbidden fruit had no power of attracting Adam unless Adam deliberately surrendered himself to the attraction. His moral combat was fought out in his will alone; he refused to bend that will to God's will.

Adam's sin brought concupiscence to man

Then came to himself and us the loss of the gift of integrity. From now on, the senses would rush out wildly through the world, and with insatiable delight fasten on whatever was pleasing, and straightway rush back to the mind and unload their conglomerated mass of things, harmful or helpful. Even man's will would suffer in this new state of things. That will was rooted in the same soul in which the senses were rooted. The senses felt their delight only because the soul which was their life felt the same delight; whether their delight was proper or improper, the soul too felt the same delight. And as a result, the will of man, face to face with the problem of sorting out what was really good, would find that through the senses and the soul, there had come to the will itself a liking and an attraction even for what was morally bad.

The struggle for us fallen men, then, is not merely a struggle between our will and our senses, nor merely a struggle between soul and body; it is a struggle between the will and itself—between the will drawn to God and the real good by right reason, and the will drawn to sin by the pull of a sense-attracted soul.

Yet man still had the power of victory. The will would always be the ruler in the household. Though it could not always prevent the senses from wandering out in search of the unlawful, though it could not prevent its own "liking" power from feeling a first indeliberate leaning to the unlawful, still the ultimate choice would always belong to it, and moral victory, though often won with difficulty, would always be possible to it. Though man could not entirely quell the rebellion within himself, he could always keep deliberate rebellion out of his will.

Man retains free will

This has been an exceedingly lengthy description of the psychology of concupiscence. But men who have souls to save should know that the saving of their souls means a struggle, a fight. It is a poor general who is not intensely interested, nay does not demand, to know beforehand what enemies he is to combat.

Who the enemies are, we learn partly from our own experience and partly from God's Revelation. To begin with, there is an openly avowed enemy, the Evil Spirit, who is determined on the eternal ruin of man. He cannot work on our will directly, nor can he work on our intellect directly; the most he can do is to create in us an attraction for sin and a distaste for God by working on our senses. He has power to touch our imagination and memory with his baneful touch, and make vivid and alluring the pictures of sin, and dull and unattractive the picture of virtue. As to the outside senses, rarely has he been permitted to act on them directly; ordinarily he accomplishes his work on the external senses by inciting other men to tempt us by a word or action. But he would be quite powerless against us, if he could not find a fickle, selfish member in our household; to get inside he must have an ally from within. This fickle, selfish ally is our sensitive concupiscence, which is con-

The alliance of the Evil Spirit and concupiscence

stantly causing our will to make indeliberate "starts" towards the attraction of sin.

No ultimate victory without medicinal grace

Revelation speaks with startling clearness on the power of concupiscence to draw us to sin. Our Lord warns us that we must constantly pray for help to overcome temptation. In the prayer which He Himself composed and gave to the world as the official prayer of the children of God, He said that we should ask our Father "and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." It is not that we ask to be freed from all temptation, but from temptation which would overcome us. He said to His disciples in the Garden, who had slept instead of watching and praying with Christ in His agony, "Watch ye and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mark XIV, 38).

Testimony of Christ

Testimony of St. Paul

St. Paul, writing the divinely-inspired letter to the Romans, gives us God's description of the battlefield on which mankind is waging against its enemy the battle which is eternal. St. Paul looks over the whole world of combatants, those with faith in God and those who know not God, and he sees all men so strongly drawn to sin by the power of concupiscence that, unless the free gift of God's grace be given to them to strengthen them against the allurements of sin, no man will be saved. St. Paul says that even the just, who have sanctifying grace, are under the power of concupiscence.

This is God's description of the battle, it is not the description of a mere man. Paul as a mere man could see only what we ourselves see. As Paul looked out upon the world of men, present and past, Jew, Christian and pagan, and estimated with human eyes and human intellect the chances man had of being victorious over sin, he had the human certainty that concupiscence was so powerful in man by the very law of the flesh that victory over sin would always be a thing of difficulty.

But Paul as a mere man could not have written what Paul as an inspired writer set down. Paul as a mere man saw and knew only what we ourselves see and know without God's revelation. What Paul as a mere man saw was that concupiscence raged universally and was the law of the flesh; he saw that concupiscence was so powerful that ultimate victory over sin would always be a victory after a hard-fought battle. But Paul as the inspired writer set down what God saw and knew. God, looking at the human battlefield with that infinite knowledge which sees with infallible certainty the past, the present and the future, saw that, although man had free will with sufficient natural physical power to resist sin, there would be no man who would not, in the face of the strong temptations of life, finally yield to sin if God did not add to the natural power of man's will, the sustaining assistance of divine grace.

St. Paul gives God's revealed world-view in the last verses of the seventh chapter of the letter to the Romans:

"I find then a law, that when I have a will to do good, evil is present with me.

"For I am delighted with the law of God, according to the inward man.

"But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members.

"Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (VII. 21-24).

Paul, speaking not for himself alone, but for all, pagan, Jew and Christian, puts a tragic question and asks what power can give man victory over concupiscence. The answer comes from God:

"Thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" VII, 25). Victory over concupiscence comes only with the Divine Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Without divine grace there is no ultimate victory over

sin. For the sickness of concupiscence there must be the remedy of grace. The remedy will not necessarily drive out concupiscence; without a very special privilege it will never do that. But it will always give to man's will sufficient strength to fight his way to victory.

St. Augustine

St. Augustine repeatedly declared that, without the grace of God, man would not overcome sin. In the treatise "On Nature and Grace," he says:

"Faithful men say in their prayer: 'Lead us not into temptation.' But if they have the capacity [of avoiding evil] why do they pray for it? Or, what is the evil which they pray to be delivered from, but, above all else, the body of this death? . . . the carnal lusts, whence a man is liberated only by the grace of the Saviour. . . . He may be permitted to pray that he may be healed. Why does he presume so strongly on the capability of his nature? It is wounded, hurt, harassed, destroyed; what it stands in need of is a true confession, not a false defense" (C. 53, n. 62).

Church decision

The mind of the Church on the question of the necessity of grace for the victory over sin is shown in the declaration of the Council of Milevi (418 A.D.):

"If anyone shall say that the grace of justification is given to us for the purpose of enabling us to do more easily by the aid of grace what we are commanded to do by free-will, as if we were able, also, though less easily, to observe the commandments of God without the help of grace, let him be anathema" (Can. 5).

Medicinal grace an actual grace

Is this medicinal grace always an actual grace? Or is it either actual or sanctifying grace? Revelation is clear in its answer. Medicinal grace is always an actual grace. Even the just man will need, over and above the sanctifying grace which he possesses, an actual grace specially directed by God as an aid against concupiscence. As we saw before, Our Lord Himself insists that all men, even the just, must pray for the grace to overcome temp-

tations. If man, from the mere possession of sanctifying grace, had the capacity for overcoming sin, Our Lord would not have insisted that even the just man would be overcome if he did not pray for special help from God. Since, then, the grace to overcome sin is a grace over and above sanctifying grace, it is an actual grace.

Can medicinal grace be at the same time elevating grace?

Can this medicinal grace be at the same time elevating grace? That is, can one and the same grace give man not only the power to resist sin, but to resist it in such a way that the act of resistance on the part of the will is a salutary act? There is no special difficulty in answering this question. God can at one and the same time give to man a help which will give him the strength to overcome sin, and the power of doing it in such a way that the act of resistance will be supernatural.

Is medicinal grace always elevating grace?

Whenever God gives the grace to overcome sin, does He at the same time make that grace one which will make the act of resistance a salutary act? We do not know. We know that we shall receive our eternal reward not only for simple acts of virtue, which are not especially connected with the overcoming of temptation, but also for acts of resistance to sin. For these acts of resistance to merit eternal reward for us, they must be salutary; that is, they must have been performed with the assistance of elevating grace. But from this it does not necessarily follow that every medicinal grace given to man is always at the same time elevating. It might be that in the case of sinners who have no desire to be freed from their sins, God gives merely medicinal grace in the time of temptation.

Grace and venial sin

Venial sin is a violation of the law of God which, because of absence of grave matter or full knowledge and consent, does not destroy friendship between God and man. A venial sin may be deliberate or semi-deliberate. One commits a deliberate venial sin when, in spite of the fact that he clearly sees that the action, though not a grave

matter, is nevertheless forbidden, still with full consent of his will violates the law. A sin is semi-deliberate when there is lacking either full knowledge or full consent.

In regard to the possibility of avoiding venial sin, we find two very important declarations of the Church. The Second Council of Milevi defined:

"It likewise hath pleased the holy Synod that whoever holds that the words of the Our Father: 'Forgive us our trespasses,' when pronounced by saintly men, are pronounced in token of humility, but not truthfully, should be anathema" (Can. 8).

And the Council of Trent declared:

"If anyone saith that a man once justified . . . is able, during his whole life, to avoid all sins, even those that are venial, except by a special privilege of God, as the Church holds in regard to the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema" (Sess. 6, can. 23).

These two declarations state that, without a very special grace, such as was given to Mary, no life can be kept absolutely free from all venial sin. The Councils do not say that no one without a very special grace can hope to avoid *deliberate* venial sin; there is no reason to doubt that a saint could avoid all deliberate sin.

But that it is impossible for man to keep his soul free from even semi-deliberate venial sin, is not only the conclusion to be drawn from the above-quoted statements of the Councils, but is the teaching of Scripture and the Fathers.

Holy Scripture

That personal sin, in some form or other, will come into the soul of every man unless he receives a special privilege such as was given to the Blessed Virgin, is proved by the following statements of Scripture:

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John I, 8).

"For in many things we all offend" (James III, 2).

St. Augustine

St. Augustine cites the above-quoted texts, in advancing his teaching of the inability of man to avoid all sin.

In the treatise "On Nature and Grace," he says:

"With all his acuteness he [Pelagius] overlooks the circumstance that even righteous persons pray with good reason: 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors' " (C. 35, n. 41).

And, again, he says: "If . . . we could assemble all the aforementioned holy men and women, and ask them whether they lived without sin, . . . would they not all exclaim with one voice: 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us' " (C. 36, n. 42).

Practical conclusions from the doctrine of this chapter

One who ponders carefully over the revealed doctrine of the power of concupiscence, sees at once the absolute necessity of arming himself against the attraction which sin has for everyone. He will see that prayer, constant prayer, for divine help is not "mere piety"; it is a necessity. He will see, too, that the senses must be watched with a watching that means control. He must, as far as he reasonably can, close out mortal sin by refusing to let his senses go out after those "attractive things" and "pleasant things" which he knows are very likely to prove fatal attractions. There are many things which he must refuse his eyes, his ears, his taste, his smell, his touch. He will see that the teaching of the Church on bad plays and bad books is not a mere "frill of piety"; it is an essential teaching of morality. A thoughtful man will be convinced of the radical immorality of the modern slogan "Follow all your instincts; let all your faculties express themselves without hindrance; it can never be wrong to do what you find naturally attractive." This slogan means "Follow your concupiscences." God has assured us that concupiscence leads to eternal damnation.

The Church is always insisting on mortification of our body. She does this to teach us the great need of gaining

more and more control over our body and its fatal power of being attracted to sin. By making our body suffer, by refusing our senses even legitimate pleasure at times, we put some tameness into their wildness.

Above all, no sane man can fail to see that the surest way to lose one's soul is to take as the norm of life: "Do whatever is pleasant; avoid whatever you dislike."

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by concupiscence?
2. What is meant by the gift of integrity?
3. Has man's will the physical power to resist all temptation?
4. In what way can the evil spirit tempt us?
5. Did Our Lord teach the need of medicinal grace against sin?
6. Show from St. Paul that without medicinal grace man cannot avoid sin.
7. Is not sanctifying grace of itself sufficient help against sin?
8. Would it be possible to have a medicinal grace which was not at the same time "elevating"?
9. What is the doctrine of the Church concerning man's ability to avoid all venial sin?
10. Give some practical conclusions from the doctrine of the power of concupiscence.

CHAPTER XVII

GOD'S WILL TO SAVE MEN

Introduction: No salvation without grace

No one can be saved if he has not sanctifying grace. A child cannot be saved unless he receive sanctifying grace in the Sacrament of Baptism. No adult in the state of sin, whether original sin or personal sin, can acquire sanctifying grace unless he dispose himself for the reception of that grace by the performance of certain preliminary salutary actions—he receives sanctifying grace either through the sacraments or by way of an act of perfect love of God; but a sinner cannot make an act of perfect love without God's actual grace, and he cannot, without actual grace, perform the salutary actions which are a necessary preliminary to the reception of sanctifying grace from a sacrament. Without actual grace, then, a sinner cannot acquire sanctifying grace.

Moreover, the power of temptation is so great that no man, just or sinner, can, without the actual grace of God, avoid mortal sin.

To sum up, for a child without the use of reason sanctifying grace is necessary for salvation. For all adults, both actual grace and sanctifying grace are necessary.

God gives sufficient grace to all men

This leads us to the important question: Has God assured us that He will give everybody sufficient grace for salvation? God has given us His infallible assurance that He will actually give every man the grace he needs for salvation. God Himself has given us the divine meaning of the Cross on which God's Son died. He has told us that from that Cross there flows out over all humanity, from Adam to the last man, grace sufficient to save each man. At any time in the world's history it will be true

that every man, whether infidel or Christian, whether a member of the true Church or not, will be given the divinely granted opportunity of eternal salvation. Even the damned in hell will have to confess that they had sufficient grace to be saved, but made an eternal failure of their lives by freely rejecting it.

Teaching of Church

The Church teaches it as certain that God gives all men sufficient grace for salvation. (Though some few theologians have doubted whether infants who die before Baptism can be said to receive sufficient grace for salvation, even these few could not claim that these infants are denied all opportunity of Baptism.) Though the Church has not explicitly defined that God gives sufficient grace to all, her universal teaching, as manifested in the doctrine of the Fathers and theologians, makes it at least a conclusion inevitably following from Revelation.

That God's will to save is not limited to the predestined, those who are actually saved, has been declared an article of faith. Pope Innocent X (1644-1655) condemned as heretical the doctrine of Jansenius, which declared that Christ died for the predestined alone.

Calvin and Jansenius

Calvinism and Jansenism cast a black gloom over the spiritual outlook of their followers by setting up a God who begins His plan of salvation by deliberately selecting certain souls for salvation and deliberately leaving others aside. To the selected souls God gives grace, not only grace sufficient but grace irresistible. These picked souls are the "elect," the predestined; predestined, not because God foresaw that they would freely use the grace which they might have just as freely rejected, but selected absolutely, without any reference to God's prevision of their future use of their free wills. Calvin and Jansenius explained the Cross of Christ as meaning that Christ died, not for all men, but only for the elect.

Clear revelation of God's sincere will to save all men is found in Holy Scripture. In the first Epistle to Tim-

othy, St. Paul teaches that God wills all men to be saved; he declares that just as truly as there is one God of all men, one Mediator for all men, just as truly as Christ died for all men, so does God will all men to be saved:

Scripture teaches that God wills to save all

"I desire, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men,

"For kings, and for all that are in high station, that we may lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all piety and chastity.

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

"For there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

"Who gave Himself a redemption for all, a testimony in due times" (II, 1-7).

The Book of Wisdom declares that the mercy of God extends to all men:

"But thou hast mercy upon all, because thou canst do all things and overlookest the sins of men for the sake of repentance.

"For thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made; for thou didst not appoint, or make any thing hating it.

"And how could any thing endure, if thou wouldst not? Or be preserved, if not called by thee.

"But thou sparest all, because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls" (II, 24-end).

Fathers

The Fathers taught the universality of God's will to save men.

St. Ambrose says: "He willed all to be His own whom He established and created. O man, do not flee and hide thyself from Christ. He wants even those who flee, and

does not will that those in hiding should perish" (In Ps. XXXIX, n. 20).

St. Gregory Nazianzen says: "The law, the prophets, and the sufferings of Christ, by which we were redeemed, are common property, and admit of no exception; but, as all are participators in the same Adam, deceived by the serpent and subject to death in consequence of sin, so by the heavenly Adam all are restored to salvation, and by the wood of ignominy recalled to the wood of life, from which we had fallen" (Or. 33, n. 9).

St. Prosper says: "Let us say with the Apostle 'God wills all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth' (I Tim. II, 4), so that those who are saved, are saved because He wills them to be saved, while those who perish, perish because they deserve to perish" (Resp. ad Capitula Gallor. c. 8).

Unbaptized infants

There is one class of persons who have given rise to a great deal of worry to theologians: infants who, through no fault of their own, die without Baptism. Can it truly be said that God gives them a real chance for salvation? Sometimes these children die unbaptized because of the open fault of parents, who, knowing the necessity of Baptism, either refuse to have the child baptized, or carelessly put it off until it is too late. At other times, the children die unbaptized because of an accident—sickness takes them off soon after they are born, and so quickly that Baptism is impossible. Or they die unborn, and under circumstances which render Baptism impossible.

The simplest answer, and the answer which is fairest to God, is to say that we are sure that God wills to save all men, even these children, and that there is placed for every man the opportunity to be saved. We know that the care of having children baptized is given to the parents and the priests and those who come into close contact with the child. This placing of the duty of seeing to the Baptism of the child is an evidence of God's will

to save the child. Some theologians say that God puts the opportunity for Baptism in the hands of parents and near relatives in such a way that the failure to secure the sacrament is in every case due to some guilt on the part of those persons; had they been more faithful to their own duty to God, the accident which took the child out of life would not have occurred.

Still, when all is said, we must admit that we do not know with any degree of certainty the full solution of this knotty problem. We know that God wants all men to be saved, and gives all men the chance to be saved; but how this will of God's is verified in the case of the infants who die unbaptized, we simply do not know.

Hardened sinners and God's will to save

Of course, in showing from Revelation that God wills to save all men without exception, not even the most hardened sinner was excluded; if God wills to save all men, He wills to save even the most sinful man alive. But it will be well to see whether Holy Scripture makes any special reference to God's attitude to sinners. The repeated exhortations of Scripture urging all sinners to repent is a divine reminder of the fact that God is at all times reaching out to all sinners His grace of salvation. If they sin again, if they are not converted from their sin, the reason is not that God refused to help them, but that they resisted the help which He gave. St. Peter reminds sinners, "The Lord dealeth patiently for your sake, not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance" (II Pet. III, 9). So, even the most hardened sinners are the object of God's mercy, which is always at hand to help them from sin. By their sins they may have caused God to lessen the abundance of His help, by their sins they may have darkened their power of weighing properly things of the soul and of eternity, and weakened the power of their will to resist sin and rise from their state of sinfulness; but God's call to penitence and forgiveness comes even to them, and

God's call means that the sinner will receive enough grace to approach God in repentance.

Salvation of heathen

Even the heathen, living in lands where the knowledge of a Divine Revelation has never penetrated, receive enough grace to be saved. If they live up to the law of right and wrong, as their reason presents it to them, if they follow the inspirations God gives to them, they will ultimately save their souls. God has promised to give all men grace sufficient to save their souls, and if these heathen do all that they reasonably can, God will infallibly do the rest. How God actually works out His plan of salvation in regard to those who have never had the least chance to hear of Revelation, we do not know. But of this we are sure, that if they do their part, God will give them the faith which is necessary for salvation, and the gift of sanctifying grace.

Will is not forced by grace: article of faith

The grace which comes to us by reason of God's will to save us is called sufficient grace, because with it we have the power of doing good and avoiding evil. But whether we actually exercise that power or not, depends on our free will. Grace leaves the freedom of the will intact. This is an article of faith. The Council of Trent defined the freedom of the will under the action of grace: "If anyone saith that man's free will, moved and excited by God, does not, in disposing and preparing him for the grace of justification, co-operate with God exciting and calling, or that the free will of man cannot refuse its consent if it so choose, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive, let him be anathema" (Sess. 6, can. 4).

Luther and Calvin: will not free with grace

Luther and Calvin explained the action of God's grace on the soul in such a way as to leave no freedom to the will under the action of grace. Original sin, they said, had resulted in the loss of man's free will; man remains a mere passive instrument in the hands of God or satan.

Calvin, with his far greater power of logical thought

than the over-emotional Luther, built up his system of rigid Predestinarianism on this false foundation, that through original sin man had lost effective freedom of will. God's will to save men was explained by Calvin in the following way: God did not wish all men to be saved; God never decreed to give all men grace enough for salvation. Grace could not be rejected; it forced man to salvation. Only the predestined received grace, the others were left to the control of nature and passion. The predestined were simply rushed to eternal glory by the irresistible force of grace; the others were doomed to an equally irresistible physical incapacity for good.

It is strange that this picture of a cruel and crude God, deliberately selecting some for a salvation which would be forced on them, and deliberately assigning the rest to an eternal damnation to which they were, without any fault of theirs, inevitably doomed, attracted so many followers. It is, perhaps, explained by saying that the world of men always contains some who exaggerate their own importance in God's sight, and others who feel that their sins have made them forever an object of God's hate. The self-righteous naturally class themselves as among God's special friends; for them the system of Calvin has a natural attraction—such a system could not fail to attract those who fancy themselves so righteous in comparison with other men that they feel that they simply cannot help being righteous. Calvin's doctrine would give them the "humility" which would save them from being self-condemned of pride. They could then say, "I cannot help being righteous; God made me that way." And just as those who felt that they were God's special friends would welcome Calvin's doctrine, so others whose sins had made them feel rather hopeless of salvation would be tempted to give up the fight against sin and put the blame on God.

Jansenius and free will

Jansenius in his explanation of the relation between grace and free will, endeavored to make his doctrine agree with Catholic doctrine that grace left man's will free. His attempt failed absolutely. According to his doctrine, the decisions of man's will in regard to good and evil are always the necessary and unavoidable result either of the power of grace or the power of concupiscence. Grace attracts the will to virtue, concupiscence attracts it to sin. If the allurement to sin is greater than the allurement to virtue, the will is necessitated to sin; if the allurement to virtue is greater than the allurement to sin, the will is necessitated to virtue. "God really gives all men sufficient grace," said Jansenius. "The grace God gives to all men is sufficient for man if we look at man and prescind from the force of concupiscence." This is a futile attempt on the part of Jansenius to preserve in God a sincere will to save all men. God's will to save man is a will to save man as he actually exists; and man as he actually exists is man under the power of concupiscence. To say that God's grace is sufficient because it would be sufficient if there were no concupiscence, is to make of God a mere "player" and of man a "divine toy."

Jansenius and merit

But there remained another Catholic doctrine which Jansenius was anxious to hold—that man acquired merit in the sight of God by choosing the good and resisting evil. To merit in any true sense, man had to be free. Jansenius admitted this. But the will of man *is* free, he said; it is free in regard to any outside force—other men, or the power of external material things to tempt man, can never force his will. This freedom in regard to outside influence is enough to give man a title to merit.

In the attempt to explain man's meriting power, Jansenius is once more refusing to look at man as he actually exists. A man's decision to avoid sin is free only when it is free from *all* necessitating influence. If

grace forces the will, the decision of the will is not free. It will not do to say, "But no external force outside man forced him." Even one necessitating influence takes away man's free will—and, with it, any title to merit before God.

Calvin and Jansenius are dead, but their ideas are not dead. The Church must struggle persistently to keep before men the sane truth that there is no "closed circle" of God's friends; God's will to save draws a line encircling His friends, but not one human being is left out. The Church must always struggle, too, to make men remember that there is no such thing as being saved "en bloc," no mere "group saving." Salvation does not come from a passive subjection of oneself to a system of religion. Even the Church of Christ is not a dispenser of automatic salvation; she is not a dispenser of divine soul-medicine, which will save even the slothful and unwilling. Salvation ultimately can come only from the active, wide-awake, free correspondence of the individual with the grace of God.

Scripture and freedom of will

If anything is clear from Holy Scripture, it is that grace can be rejected by the will. Our Divine Lord accuses the inhabitants of Corozain and Bethsaida of having rejected grace: "Then He began to upbraid the cities wherein were done the most of His miracles, for that they had not done penance.

"Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida; for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes.

"But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you.

"And thou, Capharnaum, shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt go down even unto hell. For if in Sodom had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, perhaps it had remained unto this day.

"But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee" (Matt. XI, 20-25).

These words of Our Lord sound like an echo of the words of the Book of Isaias, in which God foreshadows the coming reprobation of the faithless Jews; the Jews are condemned for not having made use of the graces of God:

"And now, O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and ye men of Juda, judge between me and my vineyard.

"What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it? Was it that I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it hath brought forth wild grapes?

"And now I will show you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be wasted; I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden" (V, 3-6).

In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul warns the converted Gentiles to remember that their conversion to grace did not make their salvation a certainty. They could fall away from God as so many of the Jews had done (Ch. 11).

Fathers

Though the Fathers, in their teaching on grace, emphasized the absolute need of grace for salvation, they always vindicated the freedom of man's will under the influence of grace. Calvin admitted that, in teaching his doctrine of a freedom-destroying grace, he was going against the common teaching of the Fathers.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by saying, "God wills to save all men."
2. What was the doctrine of Calvin concerning God's salvific will?
3. Show from Scripture that God wants all men to be saved.
4. Why is there a special difficulty in regard to infants who die unbaptized?

5. Show from Scripture that grace does not force the will.
6. What did Calvin teach concerning grace and free will?
7. What was the doctrine of Jansenius concerning grace and free will?
8. Show that the doctrine of Jansenius concerning grace and free will is false.
9. Does God deprive hardened sinners of the gift of sufficient grace?
10. Can a heathen, who has never heard of Revelation, be saved?

CHAPTER XVIII

EFFICACIOUS GRACE

Meaning of efficacious grace

Grace does not force the will. Man's will, aided by grace, has the full power of choosing the good or not choosing it. All grace, as we have seen, gives man this power, and for that reason, all grace is called sufficient grace. But we know that in some cases man's will resists grace, in other cases his will freely chooses to follow the lead of grace. Grace which actually accomplishes the good result which God wishes grace to have is efficacious grace. Grace which does not actually accomplish the good result desired by God is called "merely sufficient" grace. When we say that efficacious grace "accomplishes" the good result which God wishes it to have, we do not mean that efficacious grace determines the choice of the will; if it determined it, the choice would not be free. All grace, even efficacious grace, must leave the determination of the choice to the will. Grace never does more than help the choice; it does not force the choice.

This definition of efficacious grace is not an actually scientific definition; but a true definition it certainly is. Our definition can also be worded thus: That grace is efficacious to which man's will consents; that grace is "merely sufficient" which man's will rejects.

Efficacious grace in the light of the Last Judgment

No one can deny that the words which Our Lord will address to men at the last general Judgment will mean this: "All of you have received from God sufficient grace for salvation; every one of you could have saved his soul if he wished. But some have not used the grace which was given, and because they freely rejected grace, they are eternally condemned—grace for them has not proved

efficacious. Others have used the grace which was given, and because they freely followed the lead of grace, they will be eternally rewarded—grace for them has proved efficacious." In other words, the world-sentence of Christ the Judge on the last day must mean no more or no less than this, that the wicked freely chose eternal damnation, and the good eternal happiness.

In every discussion of the relation between grace and free will, or of that other mysterious question of predestination, not only *can* we, but we *should* begin our investigation by pondering over the words of the Divine Lecture on Grace and Free Will, which the Son of God will give to the whole world at the time of the first and last gathering of all humanity.

"And when the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty.

"And all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats.

"And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.

"Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

"For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in.

"Naked, and you covered me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me.

"Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee: thirsty, and gave thee drink?

"And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and covered thee?

"Or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee?

"And the king answering, shall say to them: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.

"Then he shall say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.

"For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat: I was thirsty and you gave me not to drink.

"I was a stranger and you took me not in: naked, and you covered me not: sick and in prison and you did not visit me.

"Then they also shall answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee?

"Then he shall answer them, saying: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to me.

"And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just, into life everlasting" (Matt. XXV, 31-end).

God foresees man's consent or rejection of grace

God with His infinite knowledge knows from all eternity, not only everything which He is going to do in time with regard to men, but also whatsoever men are going to do. He knows, then, from all eternity, what graces He is going to give each man, and He knows infallibly what use each man is going to make of grace. From all eternity, He has decreed what graces each man is going to receive, and from all eternity, He foresees that in case of some men, grace will be efficacious, and in the case of others, not efficacious.

God eternally predestines the good to eternal reward

From all eternity, He has decreed eternal happiness for all those whom He has foreseen will make proper use of His grace. In like manner, from all eternity, He has decreed to condemn eternally all those, whom He has fore-

seen will reject His grace. How do we know this? We know it from the simple fact that a God of infinite knowledge knows from all eternity what He is going to do at the Last Judgment. Christ Himself told us what He will do on the last day: He will decree eternal happiness for some, precisely and solely because they have made a proper use of grace; while for the others, He will decree eternal damnation, precisely and solely because they freely rejected grace.

What makes a grace efficacious?

Theologians have for many centuries wrestled with the question: "What makes a grace efficacious?" Various explanations have been offered, and as yet the Church has not decided what is the correct answer to the question. But this she certainly has done: the Church teaches that the correct answer must keep intact these truths:

1. Efficacious grace leaves man's will free.
2. No man is lost except through a free rejection of grace; no one is saved except through a free acceptance of grace.

First answer

The answer which seems to be the correct answer is the following. It starts from the truth that God knows from all eternity, not only what every man will do, but knows also what every man would do under any given set of circumstances. God could have created a world altogether different from this world, so different that no man actually in our present order would be in that other possible world. Though that other world was actually never created, God knows how each man in it would have acted. He knows the use of grace each man would have made. This power of knowing what actions a man would freely perform under any set of circumstances, is called God's *scientia media.* The free actions which a man would (not will) perform under a given set of circumstances are called the "conditioned future" actions of man, or *futuribles.* With this same *scientia media,* God knows from all eternity

what use we would make of our free will were the circumstances of our life different from what they actually are. He knows, therefore, what use we would have made of a different "set" of graces than the graces actually decreed for us. We are not heathens in Central Africa; we ourselves do not know what our free actions and our free correspondence with grace would have been had we been born as Central Africans. But God does know and with unerring certainty.

With this knowledge of all the possible worlds and all possible dispensations of grace, and the knowledge of what each man would do with his free will in each of these possible worlds, God decrees to create our world. When He was looking at our world as merely possible, He knew what each one of us *would* do; after He has decreed to create this world, He knows what each one of us *will* do. But He knows what we would do or will do, only because He is looking at our free will freely choosing.

What is it, then, that makes a grace efficacious? It is the free will of man choosing to use the grace properly. No grace is efficacious in itself, in its mere physical make-up. God Himself could not look at a grace which He has decreed for a certain man and say, "This grace is efficacious, independently of the use that man is going to make of it." No; God Himself does not know that a grace is efficacious unless He sees or foresees the free use of that grace by the free will of man.

Second answer

There is another answer offered to the question "What makes a grace efficacious?" It puts into grace itself something which makes it efficacious. It does not get its efficacy from the consent of the will, but only from God. God, as the First Cause of all things, has to be the cause even of man's consent to grace. No action of a creature, not even the free consent of man's will, must be independent of God. Therefore God must be in advance of every action of a creature, putting into that creature a divine touch which makes the action follow infal-

libly. This must be true even in regard to man's free actions—God must put into the will a pre-motion, a physical pre-motion, from which the action of the will must inevitably and unavoidably follow. God is omnipotent, and with His omnipotence, He can bring it about that the will chooses freely, even though the pre-motion makes the choice unavoidable.

In predestining men, God does not first look at their free use of grace and predestine them accordingly. He simply chooses some men for efficacious grace; the others, He chooses for grace which lacks efficacy. To all, He gives sufficient grace.

Criticism of second answer

This second explanation offers serious difficulties: If efficacious grace is in itself, without any relation to man's free choice, efficacious, it seems to be incompatible with free choice. It is, moreover, difficult to see how a grace which is not efficacious can be called sufficient, since in its very make-up, it is so insufficient that it would be absolutely impossible for the supernaturally good free choice to follow. Last of all, if grace is in itself and without relation to man's free choice, efficacious, one might justly say that on the last day, after Christ pronounces His sentence, the just will sincerely feel that they were forced into heaven, and the wicked will complain that no real chance of salvation was ever offered to them.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Give a definition of efficacious grace.
2. Show that the definition is in accord with the sentence to be passed at the Last Judgment.
3. Does God foresee from all eternity what use man will make of grace?
4. How does God predestine men to eternal glory?
5. What two doctrines does the Church put down as fundamental in the proper explanation of efficacious grace?
6. What is meant by the *scientia media* of God?
7. Does God know what use each of us would have made of our free will had we lived four centuries ago?
8. Give the first explanation of efficacious grace.
9. Give the second explanation of efficacious grace.
10. Why does the first explanation seem to be the correct explanation?

CHAPTER XIX

JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFYING GRACE

The fact of justification

One of the dominant notes which runs through the entire Revelation of God, as written down in the Holy Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, is that the sinner can, by the grace of God, be made just. Men are divided constantly into two great classes, the just and the unjust. To the just comes salvation, to the unjust eternal condemnation. The just enjoy the friendship of God; the unjust are deprived of that gift of friendship. Revelation is always sounding to humanity this one note, that the ideal of life and its one worth-while ambition should be, not to be numbered among the class of the wealthy, or the learned, or the powerful ones of this world, but to have one's name enrolled in the Divine Book in which God records the names of the just. All Christian religions which accept the Revelation of Christ stand in common agreement on the fact of justification. Even those who reject Tradition as a source from which we can learn Revelation admit that no one can read the Revelation contained in Holy Scripture without constantly hearing God say that the sinner can be made just, and that to the just alone belongs eternal life with God.

Nature of justification

If, then, the one important thing in life is to be numbered among the just, it is equally important to discover what this "being just" means in itself, and to learn what method we must follow in becoming just. We shall limit ourselves now to the question, "What is the nature of the state of justification," or, in simpler words, "What does it mean to be just?" The method of acquiring justice will be treated of in another volume in which the Dis-

pensation of Sanctifying Grace through the Sacraments will be explained.

The original Protestant view of justification

Luther and Calvin explained the state of justification in a manner which was at utter variance with the explanation that the Church had always taught. Though the explanation given by these founders of Protestantism has been either modified or totally discarded by their modern followers, it will be useful to our purpose to state briefly what Luther and Calvin taught on the matter. The Catholic doctrine will be all the better understood by comparing it with the opposite teaching of these two so-called Reformers.

According to Luther and Calvin, justification did not imply an internal change in man himself, any internal "happening" in man. It was all external to him. There was no real taking away of sin from man; sin remains even in the just. There was no real internal holiness or sanctity produced in man. Man is just, merely because God agrees to look on man as just. As soon as man approaches God with feelings of trust in Christ, and confidence that by Christ he will be made just, God places him among the number of the just. God then looks on man as though he were no longer a sinner; He also looks on him as though he were sanctified and holy. There was no possibility of a real taking away of sin, because there would remain, even in the just, the power of concupiscence. And, since concupiscence was, in reality, original sin, and had made man so corrupt that every act of his was tainted with this concupiscence, it followed, of necessity, that every act of his was unavoidably sinful. For the same reason, namely, that man through concupiscence was always in the state of sin, he could not be made internally holy; his state was always unholy, and all his actions were unholy. Man could strive and succeed in making his actions conform to the commandments of God; and though these actions would not be holy in them-

selves, they could be offered to God as a testimony of man's trust in God. Justification, then, merely meant that, because of the merits of Christ, sin would no longer be imputed to man, and the justice of Christ would be imputed to him. Our sinfulness would remain as before, but the cloak of Christ's sinlessness and holiness would be thrown around us and, in the eyes of God, we should be reputed sinless and holy.

Catholic teaching on justification

The Church has always taught that in the soul of the man who is made just there takes place an internal change, radical, permanent and divinely elevating. This change must come from outside, from God; but it does not stop in God, or consist in a mere change of attitude of God towards man. It begins in God, but ends in man with a complete renovation and re-birth.

Real remission of sin

In justification there is a real taking away of sin from the soul of man. By sin man is dead; justified, he lives again. Man becomes just by rising from death. Death goes and life comes. Death departs in the only way death can depart—that is, through the advent of life. One thing alone can cast out death, and that is life. In the rising from the death of sin to the life of the supernatural, the life which comes to man springs, as we shall see later, from sanctifying grace; that is, the life which casts out death. But for the present, we shall content ourselves with showing that revelation teaches with noonday clearness that when a man becomes just, his sins are taken away.

Article of faith

The Church, the infallible guide to our knowledge of Revelation, has always taught that in justification there is an inward renewal of soul by which man's sins are actually taken away. In regard to original sin, the Council of Trent says: "If anyone denies that by the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in Baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and

proper nature of sin is not taken away, but says that it is only razed,* or not imputed, let him be anathema" (Sess. 5, can. 5).

Holy Scripture teaches actual remission of sin

In the fourteenth session, the same Council says, in reference to the remission of all sin, whether original or personal, that through Baptism we obtain, "a full and complete remission of all sins" (C. 2).

In these definitions the Council was merely repeating what Scripture says concerning the remission of sins. One after the other the Sacred Writers announce that when man is made just, his sin is taken away:

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity" (Ps. L, 3).

"I am he that blot out thy iniquities" (Is. XLIII, 25).

"I have blotted out thy iniquities as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist" (*Ibid.* XLIV, 22).

"And I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness, and I will cleanse you from all your idols.

"And I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezech. XXVI, 25, 26).

"If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow, and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool" (Is. I, 18).

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood" (Apoc. I, 5).

"And such some of you were; but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of

* The word "razed" is here used as a translation of the Latin word *radi* employed by the Council of Trent. The word "raze" does not signify "to destroy utterly," but merely "to level down," or "to shave off."

our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the spirit of our God" (I Cor. VI, 11).

Fathers

With one voice, the Fathers teach a remission in which sin is actually taken away. St. Justin, Martyr: "By doing penance, all who desire it can obtain mercy from God, and Scripture calls them blessed in saying: 'Blessed is he to whom God hath not imputed sin,' (Ps. XXXI, 2) which means that by doing penance he receives forgiveness of his sins from God, not as you, and others say (and in this you deceive yourselves) that God does not impute sin to men even though they are sinners" (Dial. cum Tryph. n. 141).

St. Gregory the Great: "But if there are any who say that in Baptism sins are forgiven as to outward appearance only, what can be more un-Catholic than such preaching? . . . He who says that sins are not completely forgiven in Baptism might as well say that the Egyptians did not truly perish in the Red Sea. But if he admits that the Egyptians actually died, he must also necessarily admit that sins completely die in Baptism" (Epist. lib. 11, epist. 45).

The just are made internally holy

But the just man, according to Revelation, is not merely free from sin; he is possessed of the gift of internal holiness or sanctification. In fact, it is the very advent of this positive holiness in the form of sanctifying grace, which drives out, with its mere presence, sin, which caused the death of the soul. Holiness must always contain two elements: first, the freedom from all stain—a sort of segregation from all that is ungodly; secondly, a positive dedication to God. Man receives the first element of holiness from the mere fact that his sins are taken away. The second element comes with the gift of sanctifying grace. By this grace he is positively turned towards God, and dedicated to God in soul and in act. Revelation tells us that God gives to the just man a gift, which is an internal regeneration, or rebirth to a new life. That new life is not

merely imputed to man; it is in him. By the virtue of that new life, man is actually in the friendship of God, he receives the title of heir of heaven, he becomes an adopted son of God, and obtains the power of acting in such a way that his actions have a strict title to merit the beatific vision. Because of all these effects of justification, Scripture calls it a new creation, and calls the just man a new creature.

Justifying grace not actual, but permanent

The gift or grace of God which restores man to the friendship of God, which makes him partaker in the Divine Nature, which gives him the title to heaven by right of heredity as the adopted son of God, and gives him the power of performing acts which merit eternal salvation, is not a mere passing grace; it must be permanent. Only a permanent grace could produce in man a rebirth, and give to him permanently the power of meriting constantly the beatific vision. There can be no new creation in man, and that is what justification is called, unless man permanently be made a new creature. Theologians have always taught that the grace which justifies a man is a permanent grace, which, in the order of supernatural living and acting, holds the same place as the soul holds in the order of natural living and acting. It is the "soul of the supernatural life."

"Partakers of divine nature"

Of all the positive effects which come to the just man through sanctifying grace, without a doubt the most striking is this, that he is made in a real sense a partaker in the divine nature. Holy Scripture and Tradition agree in saying that this participation in the divine nature is one of the effects of grace. Not that the divine nature of God is physically given to the just man to become a part of him. That, of course, is an utter impossibility. Nor does it merely mean that the just man by his good actions is in comformity with the will and mind of God. It means something which stands midway between a physical participation of the divine nature and mere moral con-

formity with the will and mind of God. Grace makes the beatific vision belong to man; from the very first moment of sanctifying grace that vision belongs to man. It is natural to the "new soul" which has been given to him. What is really natural to God alone—the beatific vision—has by grace been made natural to man.

No creature, not even the angel, has by the demand of his own nature any claim to see God face to face. The beatific vision belongs naturally to God alone. Not only that, but in God it is the highest act; the most divine act of God, if we may be allowed to use the expression, is this act of the beatific vision. Because grace makes that act our act, we are said to participate in the divine nature.

Holy Scripture

St. Peter speaks of this most wonderful effect of sanctifying grace: "By whom [Christ] He [the Father] hath given us most great and precious promises; that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. I, 4).

Fathers

The Fathers assert that by grace man is "deified." In explaining what they mean, they make it clear that they speak of a real, physical assimilation of the just man with God.

St. Augustine says: "He was not, therefore, first man and then God, but first God and then man, in order that He might rather deify us. He justifies who is just of Himself, not from another; and He deifies who is God of Himself, not by participation in another. But He who justifies also deifies, because He makes sons of God through justification. . . . We have been made sons of God and gods; but this is a grace of the adopting [God], not the nature of the progenitor. The Son of God alone is God . . . the others, who are made gods, are made gods by His grace; they are not born of His substance, so as to become that which He is, but in order that they may come to Him by favor and become co-heirs with Christ" (In Ps. 49, n. 2).

The just man is the adopted son of God

Christ was the natural Son of God. He is the only-begotten Son of God, because He alone by divine eternal generation received the divine nature. But the just man becomes, by virtue of sanctifying grace, an adopted son of God. By natural right Christ was heir of heaven—heaven belonged to Him because He was God's natural Son. By the free gift of sanctifying grace, the just man participates in the heredity rights of God's natural Son.

Scripture

Scripture speaks often of the adoptive sonship which is had by the just man. "You have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father,' for the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And, if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. VIII, 15-17).

"Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God" (I John III, 1).

The just man is in intimate friendship and union with God

If sanctifying grace makes us "like God" by making the beatific vision ours by supernatural title; if it makes us adopted sons of God and adopted brothers of Christ, it effectually raises us to terms of the most intimate friendship with God. Friendship is the mutual love of one for another. God loves the just man in a special way because He sees in him His adopted son. He loves him because He sees in him an adopted brother of His Son, Jesus Christ.

In God, the Holy Ghost is love. From all eternity the Father and Son are joined in the infinite unending bond of mutual love. That love which proceeds from the Father and the Son is Infinite, Substantial Love, the Holy Ghost.

The bond of mutual love in the God-head gives rise to the Holy Ghost, indwelling in the Holy Trinity. So, in an infinitely smaller degree, the Father and Son, looking at the just man, who is by adoption the son of God and brother of Christ, send down to the soul of the just man that Infinite Love which is the bond between Father and

Son; and into man's soul as into a temple comes Substantial Divine Love, the Holy Ghost, to dwell there in an intimacy of union which foreshadows the eternal union that is to come when the just man shall see God face to face.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Do all Christians believe in justification?
2. How did Luther and Calvin explain justification?
3. Does the Church teach that in justification sin is actually taken away?
4. By what gift of God is sin actually taken away?
5. Show from Holy Scripture that in justification sin is actually taken away.
6. By what gift of God is the just man made positively holy?
7. Is this gift an actual grace or a permanent grace?
8. What is meant by saying that the just man is made partaker of the divine nature?
9. What is meant by saying that the just man is made an adopted son of God?
10. What is meant by saying that the just man is made an heir of heaven?

CHAPTER XX

MERITING THE ETERNAL REWARD

Introduction

The Catholic Church has always been the religion of optimism and hope. This is no more than we should expect from a Church which is God's sole official spokesman in the world. Did she speak in terms of pessimism or despair, she would by that very fact manifest that she was not the Church stationed by God in the midst of men to stand there till the end of time telling men what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had done to make human life eminently worth while. The Church has always combated that pessimism which sees nothing good in man. There have always been Christian sects which never do justice to a God-redeemed man. They do not seem to realize that in painting the uninspiring picture of a man, who, even after God had talked to him for three years and had died on the Cross to give him life here and hereafter, was still useless in himself—a being so inextricably tangled up in the meshes of sin and concupiscence that even the power of the Cross of God was not able to disentangle him. These pessimists have taught, that even after the Redemption, man was in himself no more than a nonentity, tolerated by God for the sake of the Son of God. They painted the picture of man's arrival at the threshold of eternal glory in such a way that man was still a nonentity, was still clothed in the garb of worthlessness and sin; he had not lived a real life, he was to begin living now. The wedding garments were given out only at the gate of heaven; they were not to be won during life by man's grace-aided efforts, and worn during life, and preserved intact during all the struggles of life.

Christ's Redemption did not give man the power of being so much "worth while" in life that, when he arrived at the gates of glory, he would by the grace of God and his own life-efforts be already clothed in the garment to be worn at the eternal wedding feast. Man could not claim even from the Cross of Christ the power of putting so much value into his life that, at the end of it all, he would stand before God, holding in his hand a title to an eternal reward.

Against all this minimizing of the power of God's Cross, the Catholic Church has always taught that no man will be worth while in the next world unless he is worth while in this life. Man is not admitted into heaven because God closes His eyes to his sinful nothingness, and looks only at the infinite worth of Christ who is leading man in. No; Christ will do His leading, and saving, and vivifying, and ennobling in this life; it is only in this life that Christ takes the hand of man. When man finishes his life, he will stand before Christ the Judge, not side by side with Christ the Saviour. But the just man will stand fearlessly before the Judge, because he will know that his life will stand the scrutiny of the divine gaze. His life was worked out laboriously, but not hopelessly, for man knew always that Christ was His co-worker, that he and Christ were living that life together—"I live now, not I, but Christ who liveth in me." He will not fear to put that life before the eyes of Christ the Judge, for it will be a Christlike life. It is true that man is to be admitted into heaven merely because God will look at the life and merits of Jesus Christ; but that life and those merits will not be a mere cloak thrown around a sinful, worthless man, but they will have become so much a part of the very nature of the man that when he stands before the Judge, he is already a son of God, an heir of heaven, holding in his hand the title to the eternal reward of heaven.

Man can merit eternal life

This doctrine of an eternally happy life with God, blossoming forth from this present life as from a seed, makes this life more important, in one sense, than the next. It is more important in this sense, that the life of eternal happiness comes by way of merit from the life we are living now. During this life we are running to a goal. Now, to a man running a race, the one thing which is most important is, not the contemplation of the joy he will feel when he wins the prize, but the resolve to cover to the best of his power the distance between himself and the goal. The happiness of victory gained comes only after the labor of victory earned.

Man's immortal life has two chapters, a short chapter here, and a second chapter which will never be finished—not because it will come to a sudden end, but because it will run on forever. God writes the second chapter; man, with the help of God's grace, must write the first. Man's part of the book, when compared with the eternally continued portion to be written by God, seems insignificant indeed. But when we remember that the second chapter will have to be like unto the first, that God's part merely begins where man leaves off, that if man has written his part badly and against all the rules of Divine Biography, God will have to make the second eternal chapter the eternal story of failure. But if at death man hands his biography to God, written in letters of gold that tell of golden deeds, God's part will speak of naught but the eternal reward of heaven given for the golden deeds of earth.

Revelation tells us man can merit eternal life

At first sight it might seem impossible that man can by his own actions merit from God the reward of unending happiness in the beatific vision. How can man merit from God, when he cannot do anything which is of any utility to God, when all that man has, even his very power of acting, comes from God? How can man merit a supernatural reward when the power of supernatural

action is a free gift of God? In other words, how can man merit from God by merely giving back to God what God gave him? But God's revealed truths are accepted by us, not because we understand them, but because they are nothing more nor less than God's revealed truths—we take them because God reveals them to us. Man listening to God speaking is incapable of making a mistake; man following the lead of his own reason often finds himself in darkness.

God has told us that heaven will be given to men as a strict reward for the merit of their good actions. Our reason may have some difficulty in seeing how man can merit eternal life. But that same reason sees most clearly, that if God tells us that we can merit eternal life, the matter is ended—we are then infallibly sure that man can merit eternal glory.

What is merit?

Merit in general is that quality or property of an action which entitles the doer to a reward. All men have a practical knowledge of what is meant by merit; any man can recognize at once when an action deserves a reward and when it does not. Even a child knows that it is entitled to a reward from the lady next door who asks it to do an errand for her. If when the child's part was done, the lady did not even thank the child, the young mind would feel sure that not only were the laws of politeness violated, but the balance of justice had been jarred. And if the errand meant a half-hour's walk to a grocery store and another half-hour's walk back, plus the labor of carrying an assortment of packages, a mere "thank you" from the woman would leave the child indignantly amazed at her flagrant violation of justice. The child would not be able to give a philosophical explanation of the notion of merit and reward, but it would certainly be able to give at least this explanation: "I did not have to do it for her; but she asked me, and I did it, and she should have given me something." And in this

answer of young wisdom is found all the material which the grown-up philosopher needs for his more scientific explanation of merit.

Three requisites of merit in general

A careful survey of the notions of merit and reward shows that an action is meritorious which has the following properties:

1. It does a favor for someone.

2. It does it with physical freedom. If a person were given to walking in his sleep, he would not deserve a reward because in one of his sleep-journeys he had taken a broom in his hands and swept his neighbor's pavement.

3. The favor is willingly accepted by the person for whom the favor is done. Suppose you are dining at a restaurant. Just as you are ready to pour cream into your coffee, a salesman of a new brand of cream enters the room, comes up to your table and, without consulting you at all, pours some of the "new" cream into your coffee. He asks you whether you would like a bottle of the cream. You say, "No, I would not." He tells you that in that case you must at least pay him for the cream he put into your coffee. You would certainly tell him that you owed him nothing; you had not asked him to put it there, and since he himself had inextricably mixed up his cream with your coffee, you had full right to drink the full cup—your coffee with his cream.

Or take this example: If you, without the knowledge of your neighbor, plough his field, you are in no way at all entitled to any recompense, even though the field needed ploughing.

This "accepting" of the favor, which is required to make an action deserve a reward, can be had in many ways. Ordinarily, it happens that the doer of the deed asks the other party whether he is willing that the favor be shown, or the other party asks him to do him the good service. When a person hires another to work for him, by the very act of hiring he agrees to accept the service.

Condign merit—congruous merit

Strict merit is called condign merit. It is had when the reward belongs to the action in justice. It is not merely "nice" to reward the action; it is, in some way, demanded by justice. The employer rewards the laborer not because it is "nice" to do so, but because there is in the work of the hired laborer a real demand for a reward.

If a soldier does all that is required of him in the service, he strictly merits his pay; that is condign merit. If in battle, he shows extraordinary bravery, and by his brave action wins the victory for his side, it is "nice" or fitting that he be rewarded by promotion or some other mark of appreciation. It is congruous or fitting that such reward be given; but no one would say that justice demanded it. He merits the promotion by a merit which is called congruous.

How can man merit from God?

Let us now see if this relation of "merit and reward" can be found in the relationship existing between God and man in the supernatural order. Can man by salutary actions do a favor to God? He cannot really give anything to God. Not only does God need nothing, but God cannot receive anything to add to what He already has. He is infinitely perfect, and has everything. He is, too, infinitely simple in His being—that means that in God there cannot be question of adding something or taking away something.

But though man cannot give God an "internal" favor, he can give Him an external favor; by living according to God's law and by practicing virtue, man gives God that external glory which is had in the free service of God shown by rational creatures. Even without sanctifying grace, man's free actions could give God this favor of external glory. But with sanctifying grace, raising man to the state in which he becomes a son of God, participator in the divine nature, and heir of heaven, man's actions receive the power of giving to God an external glory far above that which would come from

merely natural good actions. Add to this that by divine agreement, God has consented to make the merits of Christ ours, and that our good actions accordingly take on some of the worth of Christ's actions.

But how can there be question of man meriting from God, when man has nothing which God has not given him? It would seem that man could do no more than give back the favors which God had bestowed on him; and no one deserves a reward for merely returning a favor. Returning a favor merely evens the balance. So, it would seem that the most which man could do would be to try to even the balance between God and himself.

In answer, we say that for man to merit from God, the first step must be a free gift on God's part. God must give man the life and faculties without which man cannot act. Then, too, God must agree to accept man's free actions, and when there is question of supernatural merit, God must first freely grant grace without which no action is salutary.

But, granted this first free donation by God of all that we have, He leaves to us the physical power of using these gifts properly or not. He does leave us something which is our own—our free will. And God has made it known by Revelation that our free use of His grace will merit supernatural reward from Him.

Difficulty answered

There is a difficulty which naturally suggests itself: "Strict merit implies some proportion, some equality, between the work done and the reward. But there is a decided lack of proportion or equality between the acts of man and eternal happiness." Strict merit does imply that the reward be not out of all proportion to the work done, but that proportion does not have to be one of strict mathematical equality. The recompense given to hired men is usually doled out to them on the lines of strictly mathematical equality—"so much work, so much pay." But this form of merit and reward is the lowest

kind in the order of dignity. Merit in its fuller and more noble estimate takes regard not merely of work done but also of the full personal worth of giver and receiver. Man's personal worth has been sublimely raised by Christ; God's worth is infinite and it is according to the law of proper proportion that the reward given by an infinitely perfect God should be in keeping with His infinite worth. Even among men, the greater the worth and dignity of the person for whom a favor is done, the greater reward is due for service done.

Man can merit eternal life

Revelation tells us that man, by actions done in the state of sanctifying grace, can merit, with strict condign merit, life eternal in the beatific vision.

Article of Faith

The Council of Trent declared: "If anyone says that . . . the just man, by his good works . . . does not truly merit increase of grace, eternal life, the actual attainment of eternal life (provided he die in grace) and an increase of glory, let him be anathema" (Sess. 6, can. 32).

Holy Scripture

Scripture is replete with passages which state that eternal life is given man as a reward of his good actions. Our Lord makes it clear that heaven is the reward to be given by way of strict merit for good actions. In foretelling the last general Judgment, He pictures Himself as Judge, distributing eternal happiness or eternal loss according to the law of strict merit and demerit. Because of man's works, he will either be rewarded eternally or punished eternally (Matt. XXV, 31-46).

St. Paul speaks of eternal life as something which will come to him according to the law of just and strict merit:

"As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just judge, will render to me in that day, and not only to me but to them also that love his coming" (II Tim. IV, 8).

Fathers

Man's power to merit heaven is taught by the Fathers as one of the elementary notions of orthodox doctrine. St. Ambrose says: "Is it not evident that the reward and

punishment of merits endure after death?" (De Offic. 1, 15, 57).

St. Augustine: "Eternal life contains the whole reward in the promise of which we rejoice; nor can the reward precede desert, nor be given to a man before he is worthy of it. What can be more unjust than this, and what is more just than God?" (De Moribus Ecclesiae. 1, 25).

"As death is given, so to speak, to reward the merit of sin, so eternal life is given to reward the merit of justice" (Epist. ad. Sixt. 194, n. 20).

Man can merit increase of sanctifying grace

Eternal life is the ultimate reward of good actions. But there is also a reward given to a good action which is given at once—this is an increase of sanctifying grace. In the Book of the Apocalypse, we read "He that is just, let him be justified still; and he that is holy let him be sanctified still. Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works" (XXII, 11, 12).

The Book of Ecclesiasticus says:

"Let nothing hinder thee from praying always, and be not afraid to be justified even to death, for the reward of God continueth forever" (XVII, 22).

Can we strictly merit final perseverance

It is a great gift to be raised from the state of unbelief to faith; it is a still greater grace to be raised from sin to sanctifying grace, but without any doubt the gift of final perseverance is for us "the great grace." Is that grace within our power, in such a way that we can strictly merit it? Or, even though we cannot strictly merit it, are there not certain good actions to which God has attached His promise of this most important gift?

We cannot strictly merit the gift of final perseverance. This becomes clear from an examination of the graces which go to make up this "great gift." First of all, there is the first actual grace which God gives us—that of course is not merited, it is from the absolute liberality of God; before grace comes, man cannot merit what is super-

natural. A man in sin cannot, even with actual grace, strictly merit sanctifying grace, because sanctifying grace is needed as the foundation of merit; only "sons of God" and "heirs of heaven" can act in such a way that their actions are a title to eternal glory.

But after God, without our merit, gives us the first actual grace and sanctifying grace, are we then able to merit final perseverance? No, we are not. It is true that through sanctifying grace, we have the right, by divine promise, to all the actual graces needed to keep from sin. This right gives us a title, not to efficacious grace against sin, but to sufficient grace. Final perseverance is had by those only to whom God gives efficacious grace against sin. Sufficient grace gives us the power of persevering; but final perseverance implies the grace of "actually" persevering. We cannot strictly merit an efficacious grace. If we could, then the first time a just man consented to grace, he would be on the road to eternal life with no chance of ever losing it. His consent to efficacious grace would merit efficacious grace for his next act, and so on —efficacious graces to the end of his life would be assured to him. But from Revelation we know that even the most saintly can sin and lose their souls.

Actual final perseverance also means the conjunction of death with the state of grace, that God decrees our death to happen at that time in which we are in the state of His friendship. Now, we cannot merit that our death come at the opportune time. Can, then, actual final perseverance be strictly merited? No, it cannot, because it implies efficacious grace until death; and that is beyond our power to merit.

Must we say, then, that we have no way of assuring ourselves of this grace, so important to us? On the contrary, God has promised the great grace of final perseverance to all who unremittingly pray for it. He has promised that He will hear all our prayers. Surely, if

He will grant us even temporal favors, such as bodily health, in answer to our prayers, He will infallibly grant us this, the most important of all spiritual blessings which He can give us. "If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John XVI, 23).

If final perseverance is for us the Great Grace, the Key to salvation, if God sent His Son for our salvation, if the reason of the Cross was our salvation, then we can be sure that if, to our endeavor to remain in the state of grace, we add daily continual prayers, our trust in God will be crowned with the grace of abiding with God in life, in death, and in eternal glory.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What is merit?
2. What is condign merit?
3. What is congruous merit?
4. What is required to make an action of man meritorious?
5. Can a merely natural good action merit a supernatural reward?
6. How can there be a proper proportion between an action of man and an eternal supernatural reward?
7. Show that man can strictly merit eternal life.
8. What is the gift of final perseverance?
9. Can we strictly merit the gift of final perseverance?
10. Is there any infallible way of obtaining the gift of final perseverance?

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